# MODERN ORIYA LITERATURE

PRIYÁRANJAN SEN

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# MODERN ORIYA LITERATURE

PRIYARANJAN SEN

*Departments of English and Modern Indian Languages,*
*Calcutta University.*

CALCUTTA

1947

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# PREFACE

It was in 1924 that Sir Asutosh, to whom modern Bengal owes so much for its education, asked me to write out a brief account of Oriya literature. His conception of the department of modern Indian languages was liberal, and he expected that students who went for their post-graduate training in the subject should be competent to act as interpreters of the best that had been thought and written in particular Indian languages. Before that, other eminent persons had advised me to take advantage of my stay in Orissa and study the language and literature of the country so that I might give an account of it to the outside world. Circumstances no less than my own inherent lethargy prevented me from carrying out the task with any promptitude, though I had my share in teaching Oriya to the M.A. students and I also once enjoyed facilities for travelling in Orissa for which I feel grateful to the Calcutta University. More than a decade passed by. I began to realize with alarm my colossal ignorance of the subject as the days advanced. Now that the book has come to an end, I cannot but feel there may be glaring errors which the discerning eye of the critic would not fail to scan. But everything must come to a stop, and my work must not pretend to be anything more than what it is—an imperfect survey of the literature of Orissa of about a hundred years, likely to be useful to those who would use it only as a starting point.

Most of the chapters had been published in the Calcutta Review; of the two appendices, the first was written for the Patna Oriental Conference, and the second published in the Bihar Orissa Research Society Journal. My thanks to the authorities of these journals for their courtesy in permitting them to be incorporated in this book.

The second appendix is based wholly on the historical records of the Government of Bengal, and it has been put in here to give a historical picture of the beginnings of English education in modern Orissa.

I am glad to mention that one of my students, Mihirendu Sengupta, helped me in preparing the index.

My thanks are due to the staff of the Sri Gouranga Press for having helped me on through a period packed with demands on their time and energy.

*April 24, 1947.*
1, Dover Lane,
Calcutta.

PRIYARANJAN SEN

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To
The Memory
OF
SIR ASUTOSH MOOKERJEE
Who,
by organising the study of Modern Indian Languages
in
the University of Calcutta,
contributed substantially
to the
unity of Indian culture.

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# MODERN ORIYA LITERATURE

## CHAPTER I

## AN APPROACH TO THE STUDY

Previous work—historical background—channels of the new influence—missionary activities—cultural associations.

THE influence of Western thought and literature on Modern India has been a prominent factor in the development of the Indian mind at the present era. It has considerably affected all the avenues of life,—art and literature, economic conditions and moral sense, political aspirations and religious outlook, and it is to be noticed even in those who are in the vanguard of India's progress. This permeation of the current of Indian thought by Western ideas is more or less an admitted fact; any one who has carefully watched the growth and development of the Indian mind has been struck by the interesting nature of such study, though it must be said at the same time that few scholars have come forward to work out the results of the influence in any particular direction. The vernacular literatures, when examined, will show marks of this influence; but the workers have been few in number.

It is true that as early as 1885, Barada Charan Mitra had contributed a paper to the *Calcutta Review* on the *Influence of English Literature on Bengali*; and that P. N. Basu dealt in a general sort of way with this question in his *Hindu Civilisation under British Rule.* Dr. Sayyad Abdul Latif, a Professor in the Osmania University, Hyderabad, Deccan, wrote a book

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on the *Influence of English on Urdu Literature*, which had been the subject of his thesis for the Ph.D. Degree of the London University The Calcutta University has already published two works treating of the Western influence in its operation on Bengali Literature in general and Bengali Novel in particular. Dr. Jayantakumar Dasgupta, M.A. (Cal.), Ph.D. (London), has likewise contributed to the discussion in articles published in the *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies* (London) and the *Calcutta Review*. Prof. H. M. Dasgupta, M.A. of D. A. V College, Jullundur, Punjab, had published a volume on English Romantic Poetry and its influence on Bengali literature. But the subject has not yet been treated with the earnestness which it demands, with the fulness which it deserves, and with the comprehension which it may justify. Here we have a unique spectacle of an alien people influencing millions of our fellow-beings at a distance of thousands of miles and across land and sea, desert and hill, inheritors of different civilisations; though we may try to link them together by speaking of the essential unity of the human race, or tracing them to the same Indo-Aryan stock of people, the divergences are certainly no less remarkable than the points of agreement.

An approach to modern Oriya Literature is bound to take cognizance of the extent of this Western influence in the literature. Orissa is a curious museum of Indian civilisation; here have met varieties of human experience, of cultural traits, of peculiarities in custom and practice, and, what is more to the point, the geography of the country has helped to preserve the different stages of the varying cultures more or less intact. The pertinent scope of our enquiry is how far

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this province, which has been subjected to various influences in the past* and which may have influenced distant regions in the Far East in no insignificant manner, has been able to assimilate Western influence, so far as such assimilation may be traced in literature.

A survey of Modern Oriya literature should then deal, firstly, with the English conquest of Orissa and the spread of Western culture in the province; secondly, with the results of this interplay of the two cultures in the different forms of literature—prose, poetry and drama; and thirdly, wind up the whole discussion with (*i*) a summary of the results of our investigation and (*ii*) an attempt to forecast the future progress of the literature, to present to view the broad lines in which it may be expected to develop.

## Historical Background

The cultural influence of the West in India was preceded by the material. Before Europe, or for that matter England, could impress its thoughts and ideas on the Oriental mind to any purpose, it had got the vast millions of the Indian people well nigh under subjection. India might have had contacts with Greece and Italy and other countries of Europe, even prior to the invasion of India by Alexander; but those contacts were undoubtedly more or less superficial, and related merely to matters of trade, they did not go deeper than the skin and the effect did not last long, though the mutual intercourse must have been conducive at least to a good basis for self-knowledge. The landing of

"In my opinion the people of Kalinga, who have been proved to be the pioneer colonists of India, Indonesia and Oceania, are probably the very same people whom the modern barbarians of the Pacific and Indian Oceans regard with awe and wonder as people from the sky who civilized them and taught them the rudiments of culture."—R. D. Banerji, *History of Orissa,* Vol. 1, Ch. VII (concluding sentence). I am afraid this is more or less a speculative statement.

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Vasco da Gama on the western coast is more relevant for our present purpose, as this discovery of a route to the country of the fabled wealth, India, made it possible for enterprising Westerners to come over from Europe without the intervention of the Arabs and the Persians, the Venetians and the Genoese, and established a direct line of communication between India and the western countries of Europe, specially those bordering on the Atlantic. Portuguese success in this work of exploration is worthy of being called an achievement; it served as a prelude to the formation of companies of merchants in England, France, Holland and Denmark, and these companies were more or less helped in their working up the opportunities accorded to them by this knowledge through the agencies of their respective Governments.

The Portuguese traders entered Orissa in 1514 and formed a settlement first of all at Pipili on the Subarnarekha, for which they had obtained the necessary permission from the ruling chief, Pratap-rudra Deo. This Pipili it is not possible to trace now and must not be confused with the prosperous and prevailingly Christian settlement of Pipili near Gop in the District of Puri and situated *en route* to Konarak.

The English East India Company's first settlements in India were Surat and Massulipattam, and the finer cloths woven by Orissa were sent to the latter place by the sea-coast. It may be recalled that in the *Artha-shastra* of Kautilya its economic importance for production of cotton fabric of a special kind is stressed, whence the Tamil word *Kilingam* in the sense of cotton cloth.

* Prof. S. K. Aiyangar, *Orissa*, J.B.O.R.S., Vol. VIII, Part I.
In passing, it may be remarked on the authority of an old note on the subject republished in the *Bangabasi* of the year 1342 B.S., Shravan,

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The commodities sent by the Company to its factories attracted a good deal of notice and Captain Cartwright, with eight merchants and many valuable offerings, sailed in the *Swan* to Harishpur, a trading centre at the mouth of the Patua. The Fort of St. George had not yet been formally and finally secured, and it was early in 1633 that the party, after a free fight between the Portuguese and the newcomers in which the English were helped by the Raja of Harishpur, went up the river as far as Fort Bārabāṭi, the seat of the court of Mukunda Deo, the last of the Orissan kings in the real sense of the term.

The leader of the party had to pay homage and observe due ceremony by kissing the feet* of the ruling Moghul, Viceroy Aga Mahommad Zaman, a native of Persia, who, pleased with the valuable presents in gold, silver and spices offered by the Englishmen, granted them permission for trade which they had requested, though the Portuguese were busy poisoning the minds of the local Governors. The result of the negotiations was that Hariharpur in Cuttack, now known as Jagatsinghpur, 25 miles away from the town, and two other trading centres in the District of Balasore were given to the English merchants when in 1642 the port of Balasore had been closed by the silting of the river. The newcomers evidently had an easy time of it at first, as they put up fresh centres at Puri, at Pipili on the Subarnarekha† and at Hijli in Midnapore. France,

that the "Santipur Cloth", so well-known even in modern Bengal, for its beautiful borders and texture, owes much to a pioneer of Santipur, Nadia (Bengal), who learnt the art from his friends in Orissa. There are many weaver families from Bengal settled in the district round Jajpur, Cuttack.

* A. Wight, *Early English Adventures in the East*, Andrew Melrose & Ltd., London, 1941, p. 275.

† Birdwood, *Report on the Old Records of the India Office*, p. 91.

The E. I. Co. had a factory at Pipili in Orissa, during 1624-42, and started another at Hooghly in 1640 for better trade with Bengal. [Jute

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Holland and Denmark followed these enterprises by setting up their own *kuṭhis* at Balasore, but the companies from Holland and Denmark soon left off, and their sites were ultimately taken over by the English in 1825 and 1846 respectively, while the French retained their portion. The site of the French *kuṭhi* is to be seen at Balasore even at the present day. It extends over 38 acres in area; and there are ruins of some pillars circumscribing about 1 acre in extent. During the last Census operations in 1931, the houses in French Balasore were counted, not without some objection from the local residents; but they were tactfully handled and the enumeration showed the population of French Balasore to consist of about 200 souls. The land situated on both sides the Buṛā Balang had been previously leased out to a Bengali *izārādār* resident in British Balasore, but it is understood that the British Government is now the *izārādār* or lessee. The ruins are eloquent reminiscences of the potential power of the French in the country two hundred years ago.

The Portuguese put up a strenuous opposition against English influence in Orissa and Portuguese pirates frequently waylaid English merchandise on the Orissan coast. An armed boat from Holland came and bombarded the ports on the coast and ravaged them. Birdwood (p. 190) quotes a list of Dutch settlements and agencies submitted to the States General, on 22nd October, 1664—a factory was maintained in Orissa for rice and other provisions supplied to Ceylon. Over and above these troubles, malaria exacted its toll.

manufacture was begun in Orissa in 1854, and next year the Khandmahals were annexed from the State of Baud. See O'Malley, pp. 323 ff. also, *The Conquest and Settlement of Orissa*, pp. 315-28.]

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All these factors combined to make the English leave their other trading settlements and concentrate on Balasore. The fine cloths of Balasore were very much in demand, and the industry was a paying one, even though the sale price was heavily taxed, at so much as 32 p.c.

Anyway, the *kuthi* at Balasore was being improved, as I have already said. Up to 1685 the English bore patiently all sorts of damage and opposition, but from that year they resolved to protest by arms. 1685-90 was a period during which English trade did not flourish. Traders fled to Bengal during the regime of Shayesta Khan and came to Hijli in 1687 and back to Balasore in 1688. When war broke out in Bengal between the Moghuls and the English, the Subahdar of Balasore attacked the local trading settlement. There were fierce reprisals for some time from both the sides, blind fury resulting in a temporary evacuation of Balasore by the English. In 1690 Aurangzeb granted them a new *firman*, and the English returned.

During the next fifty years the affairs in Orissa enjoyed comparative quiet, but the destiny of the country was being forged in Bengal and as a result of the battle of Plassey, 1757, the English merchants of the East India Company obtained a firm and definite control over the administration of the province. This control was, however, indirect at first, and Meer Jafar and his nephew and son-in-law Meer Kasim Ali Khan ruled the provinces nominally; but in 1764 Bengal, Bihar and Orissa were annexed to the Company's rule and next year, in 1765, the Dewani of Bengal, Bihar

* Birdwood, *Report on the Old Records of the India Office*, p. 59, refers to a volume dated 1676, which contains a very interesting letter on the Balasore piece-goods.

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and Orissa was formally presented to Lord Clive by the titular Moghul Emperor, Shah Alam II.

"When the decline of the Moghul empire began the Bengal province found it difficult to maintain its hold on it (Kalinga), and the Mahrattas under the Bhonslas of Nagpur were able to take easy possession of it. It was then recovered from the Mahrattas after the overthrow of the State of Nagpur, and since then underwent the vicissitudes that Bengal itself did, till in the last few years it became an integral part of the province of Bihar and Orissa."

The rise of the Bhonslas in Berar dates from the beginning of the 18th century. In course of time they extended the dominion of the Mahrattas eastward to Nagpur and Orissa. In the first Mahratta war Wellesley defeated the Scindia and the Bhonsla, the latter having run away "at the first shot" The campaign ended with the Bhonsla ceding, to the British, Cuttack in the east and Berar in the west; he was to be known henceforth as the Raja of Nagpore. Lord Wellesley made over Berar to the Nizam of Hyderabad as a free gift, but kept Cuttack as a British possession according to the terms of Treaty of Deogaum with Raghojee Bhonsla.

British rule in Orissa begins, thus, really in the early years of the nineteenth century, on treaty negotiations having been concluded between the English and the Mahrattas. "Cuttack, Balasore and the ports thereof" came within the power of the Company in accordance with the terms of that treaty. On the 8th September, 1803, the English army left Ganjam for Orissa by the coast, reached Manikpatana on the 15th, which at once and without fight yielded itself to their

* Prof. S. K. Aiyangar, Orissa, *J.B.O.R.S.*, Vol. VIII, Pt. I.

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power, and arrived at Puri on the 18th where they met with no opposition from the *sevaks* of the temple to whom, it is said, they explained things "in a friendly manner" The British army then left Puri on the 20th September and reached Cuttack on the 10th October. The Mahratta soldiers there ran away and the citizens fled to Tangi. Balasore had been previously occupied on the 21st September, by a detachment sent out from Midnapore. Thus the whole of Orissa was subjugated without, practically, a single blow being struck against the newcomers. From that time till now the country has been free from any militarist patriotism, save and except for two small risings in and about Khurda, which were soon quelled. The British lost no time in organising the country by holding "settlement" operations, decreasing the number of landlords, and adopting various other ways to explore the financial possibilities of the country as regards its revenue. The country has been under British rule since 1803, the year of its first conquest.

That Orissa or, as is some times mentioned in the Despatches, "the province of Cuttack," was a desired object for possession in the eyes of the British Government appears from letters addressed from time to time by the Governor-General.

"From the Rajah of Berar I should wish to acquire the whole province of Cuttack, so as to unite the Northern Sircars by a continued line of sea-coast with Bengal. This cession, including Balasore, etc., to be made either absolutely, or upon payment of a moderate rent, or as a security for a subsidiary force to be introduced into the dominions of the Rajah of Berar. The district of Gunzmundelo has been an object to the Nizam. This object is to be pursued, according to cir-



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cumstances, in the event of war with the Rajah of Berar. Without securing one or other of these advantages, you will not make peace with the Rajah of Berar, after he shall have compelled you to resort to hostilities against him, unless, in your discretion, you should deem peace with the Rajah of Berar advisable on different terms." —Governor-General's Letter to the Commander-in-Chief, dated the 27th June, 1803, quoted on p. 165 (Enclosure E), *Mahratta War in 1803*, vol. I, Printed by order of the House of Commons, 5th and 22nd June, 1804. The full title of the book is "Bengal, also, Fort St. George and Bombay Papers, presented to the House of Commons, pursuant to their orders of the 7th of May last, from the East India Company, relative to the Mahratta War in 1803."

Again, the Governor-General in Council wrote to the Secret Committee on the 25th September, 1803, as follows "From the accounts which have been received with regard to the troops of the Rajah of Berar in the province of Cuttack, there is no reason to suppose that these troops are either numerous or formidable; nor is it probable that they can receive any considerable reinforcements from Berar, while Major-General Wellesley's operations engage the attention of the Rajah for the defence of his person and of his capital. At all events, it may be expected that the introduction of any additional force into the province of Cuttack will be effectually prevented, by the previous occupation of the passes leading into that province either by the British troops, or by the Chieftains occupying the territory on the frontiers of Cuttack, whom we may be enabled to conciliate to the interests of the British Government.

"The Governor-General in Council entertains as a hope, that the officers of the Rajah of Berar may be

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induced to surrender the possessions of that province to the British power without contest, and the Governor-General has adopted measures calculated to produce that desirable event. Under any probable circumstances, however, the Governor-General in Council confidently anticipates the complete and speedy success of the expedition against the province of Cuttack."—*Ibid*, p. 191.

With the administrative control of the country in the hands of the British, Western influences show themselves in different walks of life. The College of Fort William was opened in 1800, but in Calcutta naturally Oriya did not come in for attention at first. Mohan Prasad Thakur is credited with having written a vocabulary of the language as late as about 1807. It must be said that the administrative change brought about corresponding changes of outlook in all walks of life, which again were harbingers of corresponding changes in literature. When the East India Company took up the work of administering the country, they were at first unwilling to shoulder the responsibilities of educating the people, and it was only after long and repeated remonstrances and demands from various quarters, that the Government of India at last made arrangements for the Universities of Calcutta and other Presidency towns and started feeder institutions throughout British territory in India. In such schools and colleges we may notice educative agencies busy instilling into the minds of the respective students of tender years, when their imagination is plastic and nature mobile, thoughts and ideas and forms in use in a rich, foreign literature. There they learnt with admiration and emulation (however vain and absurd it might be) the noble lines of Shakespeare and Byron,

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the thought-packed sentences of Bacon and Emerson, the generous sentiments of Burke and Mill. The imagination of the students was stirred, their aesthetic sense was nourished, their critical powers were liberalised by this healthy and beneficial contact with a storehouse of ideas and images, fresh and energetic. In this way the educational institutions of the country have been functioning as so many agencies for the circulation of Western influence in science and literature.

There have been other agencies for the diffusion of the new culture which deserve to be noted. The nineteenth century has witnessed various public movements —religious, social and political. These movements have affected, in common with the other provinces of India, the general public of Orissa who, though they have availed themselves of English education to the desired extent, have been unable to escape the contagion of enthusiasm which is primarily the source of such movements. The Christian missions come in here for special mention. Carey and Thomas on their way to Bengal stopped at Balasore Roads. The Christian missionaries who came over from England first landed on the Orissan coast on the 12th February, 1822. The name of the first missionary was Rev. Mr. Campbone. Rev. Mr. Lacey came two years later. They had come some time previously to Serampore, and with the advice of the Serampore brethren, came over to Orissa to make it the scene of the Society's operations. Assam was still unsettled, Punjab was far off, but Orissa was just close to Bengal and an improved edition of the New Testament was already taken in hand. The Marquis of Hastings,* who was then the Governor-General, was

* Carey's letter quoted in *Serampore Letters* (1800-1816) by L. and M. Williams (Fleming H. Revell Co., New York, 1892), p. 35.

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applied to for permission and he readily granted it, so the missionaries proceeded to Cuttack. They had come to Orissa plentifully supplied with a considerable quantity of tracts and copies of the Scriptures for distribution—the number running up to about a thousand gospels and epistles, and five hundred tracts from Mr. Pearce. From June, 1822 to December, 1923, as many as 15 Native Schools were established, three of which were at some distance from Cuttack. These schools contained on their rolls the names of 305 boys and 63 girls.

A school was started at Puri under Government auspices about 1835; and though the first batch of students showed very little promise, the improvement had been considerable.

The early missionaries first set up an Oriya printing press in 1836 and prepared Oriya types. They brought with them a new faith which claimed converts from those who worshipped Jagannath according to hereditary practice and in all sincerity. They attacked the caste system and brought with them new ideas of worship of God as well as new methods of church organisation. It may be surmised that the influence of these missions was at first neither very deep nor very extensive but all the same they attracted the notice of the intelligentsia and influenced their lives and thoughts. For one thing, they had also induced Brahmo organisations which overflowed Orissa from Bengal, and we find later on that among the methods of modern Oriya literature there are certain elements which had been confirmed or strengthened by the sup-

See *Orissa: Its Geography etc.* by Andrew Sterling, to which is added a history of the General Baptist Mission established in this province, by James Peggs (London, 1846), Chapter III, p. 195 ff.

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port they drew from the Brahmo faith. It is difficult to omit the name of Madhusudan Rao in this connection.

But, as I have said already, it is necessary to dwell on the missionary activities with more detail. The contribution of Christian missionaries constitutes a definite landmark in the spread of Western influence in Orissa in matters affecting literature and other aspects of social life. In a letter written by Carey to John Williams we are told that one missionary was soon to be sent on to Orissa and that fair progress had been made in translating the Bible. As a matter of fact, the Pentateuch was translated into Oriya in 1814; the second volume of the Holy Bible containing the Historical Books had been translated in 1811. The title page of these two books is given below :—

The | Holy Bible | containing the Old and New Testaments | Translated from the originals | into the Orissa Language || By the Serampore Missionaries | Vol. II | Containing the Historical Books·|| Serampore :|| Printed at the Mission Press || 1811.†

The Oriya counterpart is stated in the following page as follows :—

Isvarar samasta vākya
vishesharc
manuṣhyar trāṇa o kāryya sādhanārthare se
yāhā prakāsha

"A Brother is going in a few days to carry the word of life to Orissa. . . . In the Orissa language, the New Testament, one volume of the Old Testament, *viz*. Job, Canticles is printed, and to about the XL Chap. of Isaiah of the next volume."—Letter dated 7th December, 1809, quoted in *Serampore Letters* (Fleming H. Revell Co., New York, 1892). Again, "We are just going to send Brother John Peter, a member of the Church at Calcutta, into Orissa, as a missionary."—Letter by J. Rowe, dated 19th Dec., 1809, quoted in the same book.

† Found in the Serampore College Library.

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kariaschanti
arthāt
dharmapustak.

---

tāhār prathamabhaga yahīre cārivarga
mesahar vyavasthā
Isrāelar vivaraṇa
gītādi.
bhavishyadvākya.
Tāhār dvitiya varga arthāt Isrāelar
vivaraṇa elii.
evarī bhāshār tarjamā hoilā.
Srīrāmpuraṭhāre chapā helā
San 1811 Sāla.

This is followed by a *nirghāṇṭa* or index and a hint on the pronunciation of names or, as called in the text, *nāmoccāraṇar varṇavicār,* which follows the method given in the Bengali translation of the Prophetical Books, published from Serampore in 1805. It is interesting to observe that the typography at this stage is not consistent, and the note of interrogation is represented in a peculiar way.

The first volume of the Holy Bible was translated three years later, in 1814. It consisted of renderings of the Pentateuch. The note of interrogation has been omitted in the prefixed *nāmoccāraṇar varṇavicār.* A transcript of the first paragraph will easily show how the translator was guided in all ways by the arrangements of the original.

Next we come across *Uriya Poetical Books* translated by Rev. J. Carey himself from Hebrew and

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published in the same year. The title page in the vernacular is given below in the Roman Script :—

Isvarar samasta vākya
visheshare yāhā
manushyar trāṇa o kāryya shodhanārthe prakāsha
kariachanti.
se
dharmapustak.

---

Tāhār prathamabhāg yahīre cārivarga.
mokshār vyavasthā
Isrāler vivaraṇa
gītādi.
bhavishyadvākya
Tāhār trityavarga gītadi
ehi.
ebribhāshāre tarjjamā
hoilā.
Srīrāmapuraṭhāre chapā hoilā.

The *namoccāraṇar varṇavicāra* includes the mark of interrogation, curiously enough.

The new Testament was translated from original Greek into Oriya and published in 1822. We have given above the name of the first missionary as Rev. Mr. Campbone who landed on the Orissan coast on February 12, 1822. He was in fact the first European missionary. The Serampore group had before this sent out an Indian brother, as may be inferred from the following account

"Our brother Krishnoo-das, whose memory is precious among us, took the Orissa New Testament, went

*Literary Work at Serampore, 1815-16.*

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into that country, learned the language, and laboured there with brother Peter, till arrested in his career by that sickness which at length conducted him to his Father's house above."

The book which contains this account gives the present and the past tense forms of the verb *to be* in 'Orissa' language, as well as a transcript of the Lord's Prayer, which is reproduced here :—

"He ambhamanunkur swurgustha pita, toombhur nam pubitra manuya heoo, toombhur rajya prukash heoo, jemuta swurgure temuta pruthibeere toombhur ishta kriya kura jaoo. Aji ambhumanunkur nitya bhuksha ambhumanunkao diya, pooni jemuta ambhemane ambhumanunkur rindhareemanunkoo kshuma kuri seemuti ambhumanunkur rin kshuma kur, ambhumanunkoo pureekshare ghena jao na, pooni ambhumanunkoo apuduroo ruksha kur, kipana suda surbukshunune rajya o shukti o gourab toombhur. Amen."

This has been reproduced exactly as it stood, without any diacritic marks.

This record* of literary work at Serampore contains several memoirs; the seventh memoir has a note that a second edition of the New Testament in Oriya for 4,000 copies is half through the press. It is difficult to reconcile an evident discrepancy in date here, specially because we come across the news that the New Testament in Oriya (2nd Edition) was sent to the press in 1803 and finished in 1811.

The first edition of the Old Testament was, however, completed by 1819 and finally released from the press by that year.

Carey, Ward and the two Marshmans drew up the

* *Literary Work at Serampore, 1815-30,*



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8th memoir and there is an interesting comparison in the matter of vernacular tracts prepared by Christian Missionaries.

That brings us to the subject of Christian tracts in Oriya and the various missions which worked in Orissa. Years before the General Baptists of England started a mission at Cuttack in 1822, as noted before, the Serampore Missionaries had been serving Orissa with vernacular Christian literature, tracts and translations. The first Oriya tract which the earliest convert received was printed at Serampore, 1818, and bore the caption "On the Folly of Jagannath's Worship." The second tract, "On the Stopping of Jagannath's Car at Serampore," was written by Ward. An Indian translated in verse from Bengali "The Immortal History of Christ" A handbill containing Scripture extracts was also printed at Serampore. There were "probably several other publications" by the Serampore group, but we do not know further details as yet. There was an Oriya Pundit at Serampore, who helped to rewrite the tracts and translations.

The great bulk of tracts is, however, due to the General Baptist Mission. A number of them were in verse. The most popular was "The Jewel Mine of Salvation;" its first edition was translated by Messrs. Lacey and Sutton, about 1827, from the *Gospel Messenger* by Ram Basu. The *Catalogue of the Christian Vernacular Literature of India* records 17 books printed and published by the General Baptist Mission, and of them the following may be mentioned :—

Baxter's Call (Abridged). 76 pp. 12mo.
—Dr. Sutton. 1839.

* See *Catalogue of the Christian Vernacular Literature of India* by Murdoch (Caleb Foster, Madras, 1870).

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Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress. 337 pp. Pt. I, 12mo.
—Dr. Sutton. 1838.

Bunyan's Holy War. 362 pp. 12mo.
—Rev. C. Lacey. 1851

Phulmani and Karuna. 206 pp. 12mo.
—Rev. I. Stubbins. 1857.

Watt's Divine and Moral Songs. 38 pp. 12mo.
—Dr. Sutton. 1837.

The third agency was the Calcutta Tract and Book Society, but what it did was more or less to get up portions of editions obtained from Cuttack.

We do not consider here in any detail the work done by the missionaries in the cause of education. An interesting sidelight is thrown by Adam's report by the information that the only collections of houses that deserved to be called towns were Cuttack, Balasore and "Jagunnath", with a population of approximately 40,000, 10,000 and 30,000.

Let us now turn to political movements. Orissa, which had been so long tagged on to Bengal, could not be expected to have developed its political life on independent lines but had to follow in the track through which the larger provinces moved. Indian politics had been throughout influenced by western ideas of the sovereignty of the state and the rights of the people. Marks of this influence can be detected in the large ideas which have predominated in the various stages of the growth of popular consciousness for political power. Petitioning for constitutional advance, boycotting foreign goods, imitating the aims and aspirations of Young Italy, Young Ireland, Young Russia, passive resistance and civil disobedience—all these are more or less capable of being definitely related to

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western ideas. These political thoughts coloured the imagination, and stimulated the ideas, of thousands of men and women who never had to study in schools and colleges and who were utter strangers to western literature and science.

In the old days, when the British had not assumed control of the country, literary men and, as a matter of fact, all other artists depended on state patronage; it was the Raja, the chief, who distributed favours, granted plots of rent-free land, bestowed pensions and emoluments on those persons who could show their gift by improvising poems either in eulogy of the 'king' and the line from which he was descended, or describing the beauties of nature in terms of glowing rhetoric. When the control of the country was transferred from these chiefs to the British, with it passed away their patronage also. Collective action began to supersede individual influence, and associations were formed for cultivating the old or modern school of poetry as well as for receiving and distributing the new influences.

This was by no means a new or strange phenomenon. In the history of Bengali literature we come across a number of such associations, distributive in their nature and collective in their idea, trying to function as so many centres of the new culture, or the old culture in a new form. The Academic Association of Derozio, the Vernacular Literature Society, the Society for the Distribution of Useful Knowledge, are eloquent names which the historian of the 19th century Bengali literature will remember with pride for their important contributions to the new literature that was in the making. The books published by such societies are now rarities; the papers read at their sittings live mostly in names and occasionally as essays in the

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(almost equally) obsolete journals; but in their days they were important signs of the times and also exerted a wide power in the country.

Let us now turn to parallel associations in Orissa after the establishment of British rule. Orissa came under British rule almost half a century later than Bengal; the associations formed were also after the fifties; the difference in time is thus pretty much the same. Accounts of such collective activities are to be hunted up from old newspapers, etc. We learn from them that about 1869 there was one Utkaḷollāsini Sabhā dear to the heart of orthodox Brahmins. There was another society, called the Cuttack Society, which brought out the *Utkaḷa Hitaishiṇī* in 1869 and attempted to take up the Cuttack Printing Works. This society had its branches at Puri and Khurdah. There was also a Cuttack Young Men's Literary Association, started by Bhagabatichandra Chatterji as the Honorary Secretary; in the *Utkaḷa-Putra,* 1874, there is a notice signed by Umeshchandra Sarkar, the Honorary Secretary of the association, announcing a meeting to be held at Cuttack High School in which Babu Dwarkanath Chakravarti, Superintendent, Cuttack Normal School, and author of *Shikshā-Vidhān* in Oriya, would deliver a highly interesting lecture. Babu Rajkrishna Mookerji, M.A., B.L., delivered a lecture in English on Hindu mythology at the Association on the 31st July, 1870, and the lecture was printed and published by the Cuttack Y. M. C. A. In the number of the *Utkaḷa Dīpikā* issued on the 10th August, 1867, we find an account of a preliminary meeting held to organise Utkaḷabhāshoddīpanī Sabhā on the 28th July, 1867.

* The *Utkaḷa Darpaṇa,* 9th August, 1870.

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From it we learn that Rangalal Banerji, Jagamohan Ray, Pyarimohan Banerji, Pandit Artatran Tarkapanchanan, Kapileshwar Vidyabhushan, Banamali Sinha, Gobindachandra Mahapatra, Gaurishankar Ray were among those that were present. The following resolutions were adopted :—

"That a list will be prepared of all existing books written in Oriya language, giving out the names of the books, their authors and their contents, with all available accounts of the authors themselves. A subcommittee is to be formed to prepare this list, consisting of Pandit Artatran Tarkapanchanan, Kapileswar Singh, Banamali Singh, Govinda Mahapatra and Gaurishankar Ray.

That the following be entrusted with the work of preparing a selection for the Matriculation Examination from the books noted against their names, the different passages to be finally approved by the society

Babu Rangalal Banerji and Pandit Prabhakar Vidyaratna—*Vaidehīsha Vilāsa.*

Babu Pyarimohan Acharyya and Pandit Artatran Tarkapanchanan—*Subhadrā Pariṇaya.*

Babu Chandrashekhar Banerji and Pandit Kapileshwar Singh—*Rasakallola.*

Babu Banamali Singh—Krushna Singh's *Mahābhārata.*

Babu Gobindachandra Mahapatra—*Bhāshā Bhāgabata.*

Resolved also that arrangements may be made for collecting subscriptions to defray the expenses of the Society.

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That a letter be addressed to the Government on the Society's aims and objects and requesting to be invested with authority to adjudicate on books fit for Orissan schools.

That Pandit Prabhakar Vidyaratna be nominated a member of the Society."

This Society had Gaurishankar Ray for its Secretary.

Rangalal Banerji, the distinguished Bengali Poet, presided at one* of the preliminary meetings held to organise the Society, and delivered a highly interesting lecture on the occasion.

It may be interesting to note here that when the Cuttack Printing Co. set about publishing Kavyas, and while the above Society (Utkaḷa-bhashodīpanī Sabhā) proposed to select passages from the *Mahabharata* as in Krushna Singh's version, a company had been formed, the Puran Prakashika Company, which took up the publication of Sarala Dasa's *Mahābhārata*.†

From a correspondent in the *Utkaḷa Dīpikā* we learn that a company was started at Balasore, with the object of gradually publishing all the best old works written in Oriya language; the name of the concern was D. P Das & Co. while to organise its work, a society had been started named "Utkaḷa-Bhāshā-Unnati-Bidhāyinee-Sabhā".‡ This D. P Das was Daityari Prasad Das, a Balasore lawyer, who was an enthusiast in the cause of Oriya literature.

From a newspaper account§ we learn also of a society named Cuttack School Book Company, modelled

* *Utkaḷa Dīpikā*, dated May 19, 1867.
† See *Ālochanā*, about 1900.
‡ Dated November 3, 1866.
§ *Utkaḷa Dīpikā*, January 26, 1867.

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on Calcutta School Book Society The initiative was taken by Babu Kalipada Banerji and the inaugural meeting was held in his rooms. It was proposed that the Society should have some capital of its own, about thirteen hundred rupees, to be divided into 130 shares, of which, we are told, 70 were subscribed for on the spot, and applications were invited for the rest. We hear from the *Dīpikā* also of a Cuttack society which had branches at Puri and Khurdah.

This is merely a sketch or an indication to show how cultural associations or collective efforts were formed and how they replaced the now effete state patronage. It is true that most of these organisations were futile and could show nothing in point of achievement, but they gave expression to the desire which existed among the intelligentsia to resuscitate the old treasure as well as to march hand in hand with the modern languages of India. It is necessary to collect more materials on this plan and set out a fully furnished history of cultural associations formed in the 19th century Orissa; the work would be of great interest to a consideration of western influence for which such organisations acted as so many channels.

It is necessary to refer here to a distressing event in the annals of Orissa which chilled the genial current of her soul and stilled much of her animation which might normally have developed into national well-being in the varied departments of life. It was a wide-spread famine in Orissa in the seventh decade of the nineteenth century, or to place it more definitely, in 1867. The monsoon had totally failed in 1865, but Sir Cecil Beadon did not like "to interfere with economic laws"! We

* *Ibid*, August 9, 1870.

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are told that a quarter of the inhabitants died and some English historians* have remarked "Seldom can official complacency and doctrinaire economics have combined to produce such a holocaust." It lay heavy as a blight over the nation, and exacted an immense sacrifice in men, women and children. From the *Utkaḷa Darpaṇa*, 1867, we learn that Calcutta people liberally contributed to the relief fund created for the purpose; thus, Raja Kamalkrishna, Rai Bahadur Rajendra Mullick and Hiralal Seal each contributed Rs. 1,000 and Raja Prasannakumar Tagore and Durgacharan Law gave away Rs. 500 each. The chief of Dhenkanal, Bhagirathi Mahendra Bahadur, was awarded the distinction of Maharaja for his philanthropic measures in this connection.

There was a Royal Commission appointed to enquire into the causes of the famine, and the comment of the Secretary of State for India on the Report submitted by the Commission is well worth reproducing here "This catastrophe must always remain a monument of our failure, a humiliation to the people of this country, and to those of our Indian officials of whom we had been perhaps a little too proud." In course of the debate which ensued, Lord Cranbourne bitterly reproached himself for the apathy with which the situation had been viewed and handled "But the great evil, and it was a hard thing to say, was that the English officials in India, with many very honourable exceptions, did not regard the lives of the coloured inhabitants with the same feeling of intense sympathy which they would show to those of their own race and colour (Hear, hear). If that were the case, it was not

* *Rise and Fulfilment of British Rule in India*, by Edward Thompson and G. T. Garratt (1934)

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their fault alone. Some blame must be laid upon the society in which they had been brought up and upon the public opinion in which they had been trained, and it became them to remember that from that place, more than from any other in the kingdom, proceeded that influence which formed the public opinion of the age, and more especially that kind of public opinion which governed the actions of officials. And if we would have our officials in distant parts of the empire, and especially in India, regard the lives of their coloured fellow-subjects with zealous affection as at home, it was we who must give the tone and set the example. That must arise from the zeal and jealousy with which we watched their conduct and the fate of our Indian fellow-subjects. And until we showed them our thorough earnestness in this matter, until we were careful to correct all abuses and display our own sense that they are as thoroughly our fellow-subjects as those in any other part of the empire, we could not divest ourselves of all blame if we should find that officials in India did treat with something of coldness and indifference such frightful calamities as that which had so recently happened in that country." (Loud cheers).*

The excuse for quoting the speech of the noble lord at so much length is to show that the famine retarded all sorts of healthy activity in Orissa; literature must have suffered largely from the general stagnation of life; and the spread of western influence could not be so speedy as might otherwise be expected, on account of the terrible sufferings which the Local Government viewed with apathy and thus added fuel to fire.

House of Commons Debate, 2nd August, 1867.—From the *Indian Mirror*, September 1, 1867.

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It is necessary to emphasise here the late working of the western influence, late in comparison specially with the sister province of Bengal. That province had been the first to receive western influence, and as the seat of the Government of all India, it was but natural that new changes would be brought down first to Calcutta whence they would be transmitted to all parts of India, the different districts receiving such innovations and modifying them according to their respective situations, tastes and capacities. Orissa was comparatively inaccessible; work there meant being cut off from the outside world; communication was difficult, educational institutions were few in number, and such as they were, they had no hold on the popular mind. In point of time we thus get to the early days of the pioneers of modern Oriya literature who, towards the middle of the last century, received impressions from western ways of life and thought, and transmitted these impressions to the literature through the creative agency of their mind. The autobiography of Phakirmohan Senapati has a great historical importance from this point of view, as, alone among Oriya biographical literature, it contains descriptions of the transitional stage of the country when such western influence as we now see at work began to act and to break up the time-honoured constitution of Orissan society and literature.

Though the development due to western influence was thus admittedly late, yet we should take note of attempts, by publications of various sorts, to make it possible for the literature to receive such influences. The College of Fort William, established by His Excellency the Marquis of Wellesley for properly equipping the servants of the East India Company,

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brought out one dictionary, or properly speaking vocabulary, for the use of its students. The title-page ran as follows :—

To

The Rev. W Carey, D.D.,

Professor of the Bengali, Sungskrit and Marhatta Languages, in the College of Fort William,

This work
is most respectfully dedicated
by his most Obedient Humble Servant,
Mohunpersaud Takoor.

Calcutta, July 1, 1811.

A few remarks about the contents of the book require to be made here. It received considerable patronage at the time of its publication, the Hon'ble the Governor-General having subscribed one hundred copies for the East India Company. Among other subscribers the names of Hyderam Bandyopadhyay, Lt. T. Roebuck and H. Sargent may be mentioned. The vocabulary had 32 divisions under different heads :—God, spirits, universe, the sex and age of man, kindred and affinity, parts of the body, accidents of the body and soul, natural senses and their objects, of diseases, of remedies in general, materia medica, quadrupeds, birds, fishes, insects, useful trees and plants, metals and stone, apparel, food, house and furnitures (sic), husbandry, trade and commerce, trades and professions, court of justice, school, kingdom, virtues and vices, adjectives of men, arts and sciences, ecclesiastical matters, verbs and adverbs. The words were arranged in three columns as follow the word in Oriya script was first put in, it was followed

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by its romanized form for the purpose of pronunciation, and then came the English synonym.

Earlier, perhaps, in the century John Leyden attempted a Grammar of Oriya and Bengali with a comparative vocabulary. The first part consisted of the Bengali Grammar, with notes on different items as sandhi, shabdarūp, strītva, kriyārūp, samāsa, etc.; the second consisted of the Oriya Grammar written in Oriya characters and on the lines of the first part; the third was a comparative vocabulary of Sanskrit, Bengali, Prakrit and Oriya words systematically arranged. Except for the Sanskrit words, the Oriya characters are used for words of Indian origin. One stumbles upon this work in a list of manuscripts where the information is given that this particular manuscript (it seems to have been never published) was acquired in 1824.

The second attempt was made by Rev. Ames Sutton and Bhubanananda Nyayalankar in 1843, under the name of *Utkaḷa Bhāshārthābhidhāna.* Next year was published another dictionary, *Sādhu-Bhāshārthābhidhāna.* Its title page runs thus A vocabulary /of/ current Sanscrit Terms, /with/ Oriya definitions.†

It was thus an anonymous publication. The next dictionary was *Shabdanidhi,* of the Das-Patnaik's series, published in two parts, the first dealing with the letters, *A* to *NA*, the second with *PA* to *HA*, both dated 1883. It was compiled by Chaturbhuj Pattanayak, B.A.,

* See *Catalogue of the Bengali and Assamese manuscripts in the Library of the India Office.* By the Late James Fuller Blumhardt, M.A., Oxford University Press, 1924.

† *Sādhubhāshārthābhidhāna arthāt | utkaḷa-bhāshā-sankrānta ye samasta Sanscruta shavda cadanti bhāshāre tāhāra vodhaka abhidhāna.||* Compiled for the use of the Government Schools in Orissa, Cuttack Printed at the Orissa Mission Press, 1844.

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and Sj. Shib Narayan Nayak, and published by Bhagaban Chandra Das at his own expense. From the obligations admitted by the editors, it appears that there were no other dictionaries published in the interval between 1844 and 1883. Help was taken from *Vāchaspatyabhidhāna*, *Shabdastoma-Mahānidhi*, *Shabdakalpadruma*, *Amarakosha*, *Shabdakalpalatikā*, *Shabdasāra*, *Pocket Dictionary*, *Prakṛtivāda*, *Shabdārtha-Prakāshikā*, *Gitābhidhāna*, and the two Oriya Dictionaries just mentioned. This new publication was also cheap in comparison, having been priced at about Rs. 2, while Sutton's cost Rs. 6 and Muller's Rs. 15. Apart from the compilation of dictionaries, there were other books showing the new influence at work. The Calcutta School Book Society brought out a number of texts for children *Nītikathā* or Fables appeared in three parts —the first contained stories; the second, 14 heads like *Lobhara Kathā, Dhanākānkhi Bālakara Kathā;* the third, 45 fables like a frog and a bull, a wolf and a fox, a lion and a mouse, with 'morals' or *tātparyas*. These ran through several editions; the fourth edition of Part III is dated 1866. This seems to have been more popular, as the fifth edition of Part I is dated 1891, and the fourth edition of Part II is dated 1877. The *Nītibodh*, a selection from Chambers's Moral Class Book translated by W C. Lacey from the Bengali of Raj Krishna Banerji for the use of Government Schools, was published in 1884 by the Calcutta School Book Society. As a matter of fact, a list of the Oriya publication of the School Book Society attached to the book *Nītibodh* contained the names of 22 books of all sorts, arithmetic, essentials of geography, sketches of history, elements of science, etc., etc. Most of the attempts to write text books in later times continued to

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be crude; *Oriya Geography* or *Bhūgol Vidyā, Vishay, Pruthīvī o tāhār desha o nivāsimānanka sankhepa-vruttānta*, compiled by Rev. J. Phillips, which ran through a second edition in 1855 at the Orissa Mission Press deserves a passing notice.

Considering the times in which it was written, *Darshana Chandra* printed in 1868 by Gowri Ch. Mahanti was more than ordinarily ambitious in design. It was written in Oriya verse and contained an abstract of the different systems of Sanskrit Philosophy. One simply wonders what demand this book tried to meet. Anyway, it presupposes the existence of a high level of general culture in the country, available in the vernacular.

There was a grammar of the Oriya language composed and published in 1867, as we find from an advertisement in the *Indian Daily News* "Handbook of the Oriyah Language, by T. J. Maltby, M.C.S., for the use of District officers and others. Clothbound, 215 pp.; to be used as a text-book, and priced at Rs. 4 cash."

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## CHAPTER II

# PERIODICAL LITERATURE

The *Dīpikā—Hitaishiṇī—Putra—Prabhā* and other papers.

The Christian Missions in Orissa, taking their cue from the activities of missionaries in other provinces, set up a printing press at Balasore and Cuttack. A monthly periodical, *Jnānaruṇa,* edited by Rev. C. Lacey, was begun in 1849, but soon given up as expensive. *Aruṇodaya,* another monthly, begun in 1861 and financed by the Christian Vernacular Literature Society, was continued for 3 years. But it was some time before journalism became a practice, and we may proceed to give an account of the indigenous periodical literature with occasional excerpts, starting with the *Utkaḷa Dīpikā.*

The *Utkaḷa Dīpikā,* of which the first number was missing, was printed on four pages and published from Alam Chand Bazar, Cuttack. Its quarterly subscription amounted to Re. 1/12. It advertised books for sale and the first lot included (1) *ukil o muktār bishayare nūtan dastar āmal* with *San,* Act 20 of 1865; (2) Act XIV of 1859; (3) Schedule of Registration fees —in Oriya; (4) *Shakuntalā Upākhyāna,* translated into Oriya from Iswarchandra Vidyasagar's Bengali book, and priced annas four only.

The *Dīpikā,* born amid famine, reported in its number of August 25, 1866, that the following Indians were taken into the Cuttack Relief Committee—Sri Raja Bhagiratha Mahindra Bahadur of Dhenkanal Killa, Babu Rangalal Bandyopadhyaya, Babu Dinanath Sarkar, Babu Ishanchandra Bandyopadhyaya, Babu

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Lakshminarayan Raychaudhury. It was resolved in that Committee that (1) distressed women would be supplied with cotton for spinning, and the yarn spun by them would be taken in exchange of rice; (2) destitutes in the town too weak to walk would be carried to hospitals by the help of *doolies* and porters; (3) they would also be supplied with cloths. A letter dated 1st September, 1866 discussed "if the Oriyas were naturally foolish", a subject pursued in its issue of the 15th September. The issue of the 28th September contains an extra sheet detailing verses in the old fashion on famine and the sufferings it entailed.

Balasore correspondence is very frequent, one correspondent informing the public that 'a local company has been formed with the idea of gradually publishing the best Oriya books. The concern has been named D. P Das and Co., Daityari Prasad Das, a local pleader, being the soul of the venture. To help the company to its goal, a society has been established "utkaḷa-bhāshā-unnati-vidhāyinee" samiti.'

The paper dated January 26, 1867 contains an interesting note

> Āmbhemāne atyanta ānandar sahit jaṇāuachhu ye oḍishāpradeshara skulsamūhanimitta oḍiyā pustak prastut o mudrita kāraṇ ek samāj hoiachhi o ethira nām kaṭaka skula buk kumpāṇi sthir hoiachhi. gata gurubār sandhyāsamayare shrijukta Bābu Kālipada Bandyopādhyayanka baiṭhakkhānāre uktabābunka nimantraṇānusare e nagarar keteka sambhrānta ethira anusṭhāna kariachhanti. e kumpānira muḷadhana āpātataḥ etc.

"We beg to announce with much pleasure that a society has been started for preparing and publishing



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Oriya books for Schools in Orissa. Some respectable gentlemen of the town have set it going, having met, according to invitation, in the drawing room of Babu Kalipada Banerji. The capital of the Society for the present is " etc.

There is a news item published in the issue of the 19th May, 1867 where Rangalal Banerji was reported to have presided over a meeting of the Utkaḷabhāshā-punaruddīpana sabhā and said, among other things

> Utkaḷabhāshā eban vangabhāshār madhyare tādrusha bibhinnatā nāhin, e kathā samaste abagata achhanti. bisheshaṇ bisheshya sarvanām eban kriya ehi chaturvidha bhāshār mūḷa; utkaḷ eban vangabhāshāre prāya ehiprakār abhinna kebal bhinna bibhaktigata pratyaya samudaya ek prakār na hebāru prabheda bodha huai.

"Everybody knows that there is not much of a difference between the languages of Bengali and Orissa. The basis in the adjective, noun, pronoun and verb is the fourfold foundation of the language, and is almost unchanged in Bengali and Oriya. The apparent difference is due to the inflexions of the different forms."

On the 28th July the promoters of the Utkaḷa-bhāshoddīpanī Sabha met in session. Babu Rangalal Bandyopadhyaya, Jagamohan Ray, Pyarimohan Bandyopadhyaya, Pandit Artatrana Tarkapanchanan, Kapileswar Vidyabhushan, Banamali Sinha, Gobinda-chandra Mahapatra, Gaurisankar Ray were present. Pandit Artatrana, Kapileswar Vidyabhushan, Vana-mali Sinha, Gobinda Mahapatra and Gaurishankar Ray were asked to prepare a descriptive catalogue of

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Oriya books. Some of the members were asked to make their selections from books assigned to them, so that these selections might be compiled into a Reader for the Entrance Standard of the University; *Vaidehīsha Vilāsa* was assigned to Rangalal Babu and Pandit Prabhakar Vidyaratna; *Rasakallola* to Babu Chandrashekhar Bandyopadhyaya and Pandit Kapileshwar, etc., etc.

Bichhanda Pattanayak, Inspector of Schools in Sambalpur division in the Central Provinces, wrote in a letter to the editor of the paper to say that Oriya language had been all through a subject for instruction. There was an adverse criticism of the *Rasapanchaka* in the Education Gazette, and consequently some irritation was felt; Bichhanda Pattanayak published a circular letter in the *Utkaḷa Dīpikā* in its issue of the 15th February, 1868 and his reaction to the times may well be studied there.

It was printed from 1867, August, about one year after the paper started. There is a curious advertisement dated 5th July, 1867, under the signature of Gobindachandra Pattanayak, of Balasore, who informs the scholarly readers of the paper that "he had, about a year ago translated into Oriya, Vidyasagar's *Vyākaraṇ Kaumudī* in four parts and Ramkamal Sharma's *Dhātu-viveka*, and made them over to the Calcutta School Book Society. He had also prepared the *Varṇavijnāna* in 2 parts. These will soon be published. He has recently taken it upon himself to translate the *Kādamvarī*, which others are requested not to attempt," etc.

*The Orissa Patriot*, or *Utkaḷa Hitaishiṇī* came out in 1871. Behary Lall Pandit was the Honorary

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Manager. It was an Anglo-Oriya publication, published on the 8th and 24th of every month. The vernacular portion was called *Utkala Hitaishiṇī*. Vol. 3, No. 1 appeared on August 8, 1873—after a long interval, after a lapse of 3 years, "two years and a half", according to the English part of the paper.

Its motto was *To permit the Liberty of the Press is the part (of) a wise government. To preserve it is the part of a free people.*

Among the notes which could be culled from the volume available, the following information, necessarily desultory, may yet be found interesting to the present-day reader.

Among the news items, we find (1) when T. E. Ravenshaw was away on 3 months' leave, Beames officiated in his place as the Commissioner of the province; (2) V Irwin, Offg. Magistrate and Collector, died on 15th August, 1873; he was a Roman Catholic. We are further told that a public meeting convened on Sunday, the 17th of the month, under the initiative of Rangalal Banerji was held in the Press Building of the Cuttack Printing Company, in which subscriptions were collected for aid towards the maintenance and education of the two orphan sons of Michael Madhusudan Dutta. The paper views with sympathy this move, because, it asks, who but a poet can appreciate a poet?

There are advertisements for (1) an *English and Oriya Dictionary* compiled from various eminent sources, containing copious meanings and explanations, with phrases and pronunciation of many difficult words, "now in the Cuttack Mission Press", etc., signed by D. R. Rout; (2) Dinakrushna Dasa's *Ārta-trāṇa-chau-*

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*tishā*, corrected and edited by Prabhakar Chudamani; (3) *Hanumāna-chautishā*, *Uddhava-chautishā*, *Prabhātavarṇanā* and *ārata-bhanjana* to be had of Kesabchandra Mahapatra, or at the house of Prabhakar Chuḍamani, Dagarpara.

There is an expression given to Oriya patriotic poetry in a few lines—*putramānanka prati utkaḷabhūmira hitavachan o kamisananku prārthanā*, and also in the *utkaḷa-viḷāpa*, composed on 1st March, 1874 gaḍajāta putra shuṇa mohara minati, samaste bolante jangala jati/ethire tumbhe na māṇucha kshati mugala bandha dhaniputra mora/kete achhanti baḍa svārthapara.

There is a notice of the mahimā sect which was to be found in Banki, formerly a Gaḍajat State, and neighbouring Gaḍajat mahals; their chief doctrine is that God is formless. They worship the elements and do not believe in any corporeal deity. They dine with all castes except Brahmins and washermen. They are preaching the principles of their faith throughout the length and breadth of the Tributary Mahals. Their headquarters are at Banki, where their *guru* lives. Some of them went to the Atgarh State to propagate their faith, but unfortunately there was a clash.*

Another interesting note discusses the origin of the Mastan Brahmins. Were they forerunners of the Aryan settlers? Or were they sudra soldiers putting on the sacred thread just before the attack of a Telugu chief? Chashas and Khandaits also wore the sacred thread. The Mastans like the *suārs* (cooks) of Jagannath Dev were of the Balaram gotra.

* This is not all correct; the headquarters of the Mahima sect were really in Dhenkanal.

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The number of November 24, 1873, acknowledges receipt of the fortnightly, *Videshī*.

The reader gathers the impression that the *Hitaishiṇī* was the rival of the *Dīpikā*.

Raja Dayanidhi Birbar Harichandana of Talcher died about this time, and Jagamohan Ray was a Deputy Magistrate of Cuttack—these facts also we gather from the paper.

The *Hitaishiṇī* ran against the *Videshī* and *Utkaḷaputra*. It recognised the service to Orissa of William Wilkinson, 'the just man' of Khoordah.

Two interesting passages may be quoted here from the February issue

(*a*) Bangalāre yerup keri, mārshmen o dāf utkaḷare separi lesi, bakli o saṭan. abagata helun snehāspada rebhārenda bakli sāheb vilātaku jibār vāsanā kariachhanti. āmbhemāne bakli sāhebaku ki āuṭhare dekhibāku pāriba!

"Lacey, Buckley and Sutton are to Orissa what Carey, Marshman and Duff have been to Bengal. We learn that Rev. M. Buckley has expressed a desire to go to England. Shall we see him again?"

(*b*) Āmbhemāne abagata helun ye, bānki, āthagaṛh, dhenkānala, tāḷacher o khordhāstha mahimādharma-sampradāya byaktimāne erup prachār kariachhanti ye ehi divyasinhadevanka 21-22 o 23 ankare utkaḷare bhayankara durbhikkha paḍiba. Achyutananda e vishayare ki mat prakāsh kariachhanti kehi kahi pāre?

"We have come to know that people professing the Mahimadharma and belonging to Banki, Athgarh, Dhenkanal and Talcher are giving out that the ankas 21-22 and 23 of Divyasinha Deva's regime will witness

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dire famine. Who can say what opinion has Achyutananda pronounced on the matter?"

The following excerpts from the editorial may also prove of interest (*a*) "Nearly two years ago the Government of Bengal has (*sic*) sanctioned the expenditure of Rs. 3,000/- for the preparation of a series of good Uriyah School books. But nothing, we are sorry to observe, has yet been done in this direction. The want of Vernacular School books is so much felt at present, that it would not be too much to say that the progress of education has to a certain extent been deterred owing to their absence."*

(*b*) "We have been favoured with a pamphlet by Babu Rungo Lall Banerji, Deputy Magistrate of this District on the identification of certain tribes in the Purans with those noticed in Col. E. T. Dalton's Ethnology of Bengal. The writer has shown much research and erudition of Sanskrit Scholarship in this short essay. The application of Puranic facts and the tracing of these facts to their proper limits are satisfactory."†

(*c*) "T. J. Maltby, Esqr., of the Madras Civil Service has a work entitled "A practical Hand-Book of the Uryah language" in the Press and it will shortly be out. The object of the author is to offer to the public a work as a tentative model for Romanizing all the languages of India upon a uniform plan. The book is intended to illustrate Uryah language in the order of its importance also. The work will be very useful for Europeans desirous of learning Uryah no doubt. Messrs. Wyman & Co. have undertaken the publication."‡

* March 1, 1874.
† April 1, 1874.
‡ May 10, 1874.

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There appears a notice on 16th October, under the signature of Gunanidhi Dasa, Secretary, Utkala Jnanadayinee Sabha, that the association will be closed for two months from the 10th, to open in the meantime according to necessity.

The paper was decidedly anti-Brahmo in tone, as may be seen from an article dated February 16, 1875, on "Brahmos in the Brahmin Land" It was also anti-Bengali with a vengeance, and it notes that, of the two men of Balasore charged with defalcation of cash, one was a Bengali and a favourite clerk of Beames's; also that post-office jobs had become the monopoly of Bengalis!

The new almanac was given some room in the paper in more than one issue.

A remark from a contemporary issue of the *Bengali* quoted in the paper may seem interesting evennow "The number of schools in the (Orissa) Division does not exceed, we believe, that in the 24-Pergunnas, Hooghly or Burdwan District; and if the educational affairs of these districts can be managed by a Deputy Inspector we fail to see why Orissa should require the services of a full-fledged Inspector", etc., etc.

The following appeal issued on 1st April, 1875, by Obinash Chunder Chatterji of Shahibzadah Bazar, Cuttack is rather intriguing:

"The undersigned will be happy to receive any contribution from the Patriotic public of Orissa, to the fund now being raised in different parts of Bengal for the defence of the Editor of the *Saptahic Samachar,* in the libel suit filed against him in the original side of the High Court by the Progressive Brahmo Missionary Babu Womanath Goopta."

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Another notice informs the reader that the Utkaḷa-Hitaishiṇī Press has printed three books—*Rasabatī*, *Koḷāhaḷa* and *Kamaḷākānta* under the signature of Ramaprasada Dasa.

Two other passages on the Bengali-Oriya question "While the old feud between the Bengalees and the Uryahs in the Southern part of the Province

it is being revived in the Northern District. Whatever might have been the status of the Uryahs as regards Government patronage under the native sovereigns of Orissa, but at intervals the religious reformers from outside had obtained supremacy in the Durbars of the native Rajahs when they ruled supreme in Orissa", etc.

The other passage is more understanding and tolerant.

"Village accountants in the latter end of the Marhattas' rule were not even to be seen in the higher sphere of the service of the State. They on the other hand gave no little trouble to the Marhattas. They often conspired with feudal militia of the peasantry, defied the authority of the Paramount Power, and resisted paying the just dues of the State. When the Province passed into the hands of the British nation, there was not a single man of Uryah extraction in Government employ. The Uryahs are famous for their dull-headedness, and consequently whatever little attempt was made to acquire the foreign language—Persian then being the Court language—they failed. Hence the service of the natives of the Province in Government employ was out of the question when the choice is between a Bengalee and an Uryah candidate, the problem apart from all considerations of the sterling superiority of the former has another aspect.



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The Bengalee is no adventurer, no intruder in Orissa. The Bengalee settlement in Orissa dates from the conquest of Tribeni in Bengal, when the conqueror brought with him a colony of his Bengalee subjects, gave them rent-free lands and conferred on them places of trust. So was and is the case with the alien conquerors of the Province still the Bengalees are coming in numbers to Orissa their number is not so large as the flocks of Uryahs who weekly make their perambulations to Bengal''

The above excerpts will serve to show the level of the newspapers in Orissa seventy years ago.

The *Utkaḷa Darpaṇa*, a monthly from Balasore, started in 1873 and scoring an easy first from the literary point of view, numbered Radhanath, Madhusudan and others among its contributors. It was issued under the patronage of the Kumar Bahadur of Balasore, and contained the first attempts of the writers of the new literature. A fortnightly in 1877, a weekly since 1879, it enjoyed a short but memorable life for about a dozen years and then ceased to exist by 1884. Radhanath was the leading soul; it was he who, touched by an appeal made by Beames, persuaded Kumar Baikunthanath to publish the new venture from the Utkal Press.

There is an illuminating discussion on Oriya language as the medium of instruction. Bengali had been serving as such since the beginnings of British rule in Orissa. Everything immediately required was easily supplied in that way, so Orissa did not feel the want acutely. But the great famine brought out the weakness of Orissa in all respects and gave fillip to the national idea, and Gaurishankar and Bichitrananda tried to work for the spread of Oriya language and

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literature as an instrument of culture. They used the Cuttack Printing Works as the centre of their activities. Later on, there was an attempt to bring Bengali back to its position as the medium of education and culture. This started an agitation. Ravenshaw held to Oriya; Beames showed in his Comparative Grammar that Oriya was a prior language. From Hughli, Rangalal Banerji wrote a letter to the editor of the *Dīpikā,* showing the futility of the proposed substitution of Bengali for Oriya.

In 1874, *Dharmabandhu* appeared from Balasore.

The *Utkaḷa-Putra,* a fortnightly started in May, 1873, and printed and published by Syamsundar Nayak, was a commentary on the old culture of Orissa and also on the events of the day. In one of its issues it discusses the abundance of Oriya manuscripts and in another, in the issue of the 15th August, 1875 it bewails Orissa's loss at the death of Bichitrananda Das, through an elegy, composed in the old fashion to the tune *Chintā-Kāmodī* by Rājmohan Pal. The elegy runs thus

Oḍishābāsiṇa karai rodana mane bahi chintā ati.
bijnaputraku muṇ harāiṇa ebe paḍilā mora durgati.
kisa karibi muhin.

The people of Orissa are lamenting, greatly perturbed Having lost my wise son, I have fallen on evil days. What shall I do?

The same issue contains the review of a book named *Arthavyavahāra* translated from Bengali by Kashinath Acharyya.

Regarding the general policy of the paper, it may be added that it advocated women's education.

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"In spite of the abundance of Oriya manuscripts," remarks the paper in one of its issues, "the real poets were very few and their works were limited in number. Probably it will beat all the other modern Indian languages in the number of its manuscripts; but the common run of poets and their poems hardly add anything to the literature. There is not a single epic, not a single drama in the language; it has only erotic and devotional verses, quatrains and *chautishās,* translation of the *Rāmāyaṇa, Mahābhārata* and the *Bhāgavata,* and collections of six and nine *poyees.**"

The paper was thus critical of the past and the present, though enthusiastic over the national cause.

The *Oḍiā,* a weekly journal (4 quarto pages in Oriya with 2 pages in English as a supplement) was started in October 26, 1887. It was said to be "mainly devoted to the welfare of Jagarnath Pilgrims," and the annual subscription was Rs. 2/- only. It started "in the 35th *anka* of Divyasinhadeva's rule." Its editor was Dwarkanath Das, of 44, Bārbāṭi Street, Balasore, and it was published and printed at De's Utkal Press, 22, Raja Shyamananda De Bahadoor's Street, Balasore, 1887. A. C. Trent, District Magistrate, opened a Jagannath Pilgrim fund to which Rs. 8,000/- was promised, but Rs. 3,500/- was realised.

The first issue refers to the great demand in America and Europe for newspapers, etc., and says "What is the need of Oriya papers for Oriya readers who may be counted on one's fingers in the province

* What is a *poyee* verse? It is a *tripadī* verse, 8, 6, 10—24 in all, and whatever its length, each *poyee* must be followed by a *chokhee,* another variety of the *tripadī* (8, 8, 13) followed by two lines of inequal length (the 1st consisting of nine *aksharas* and the second of 13). The figures indicate number of *aksharas.* Six and nine *poyees* constituted complete poems as regards length.

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of Utkala, small in extent and full of hills and jungles? Does not one see how many papers have been born and how many have been crushed under the cruel wheels of fate in the last few years? The *Utkaḷa-putra* disappeared in its lying-in room, leaving Orissa in tears, the *Swadeshī* died before its time, cutting itself off the country. The *Darpaṇa* suddenly disappeared, after having convalesced from many dangerous diseases. In course of time the *Bodhadāyinee, Pradīpa, Sevaka, Shikkhābandhu* and other papers left this world. One feels inclined to shed tears, looking at the survivors."

There is a regret at the appointment of a Bengali teacher to the post of the 2nd master, Puri School, while Oriya graduates were available, but the next issue corrects this attitude, as the Bengali teacher was Bijay Babu who knew Oriya very well and who had already served in Orissa as a Head Master, in the Bamra Raj School.

From the first issue of the paper we come to know that physical exercise was first introduced to Balasore Zilla School during winter.

After the first issue, the supplementary also was written in Oriya.

We can get a few interesting bits of information from the issues of the paper; for example, Balasore Barbati School, later a bone of contention between Kumar Baikunthanath and Babu Bhagabanchandra Das, was first set up by a few local Brahmos—Babu Shibnarayan Nayak, Babu Ramnath Das, Babu Udaynath De, Babu Bholanath Dutt and others—and then named "Brahmo Samaj School."

From it we also learn that an Annual Agricultural and General Exhibition was set up on January 18, 1888

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by the Orissa People's Association. There is also a narrative on Matrigupta in serials.

In the same year, *viz.*, 1887, the *Navasamvāda* was started from Balasore, edited by Bhutanath Basu and with the motto Satyameva jayate nānṛtam—truth alone conquers, not falsehood; as well as 'tasmin prītistasya priyakāryasādhanan ca tadupāsanameva' Love for Him and doing deeds which will please Him constitute His worship. Evidently the Brahmo ideal had been at work, and it may be borne in mind that the paper began in the Maghotsava week, to be more specific, on the 12th Magh. The first poem was named *navasamvād*, and composed to the tune Rāmkeḷi, in the old fashion

> Shuna are navasambāda bāre deṛi shrabana
> navayuga bibhu bidhāne āsuachhi vahana
> mangaḷa vājanā bājuchhi shuna bhāratadvāre
> chaudike uḍuchhi vijayadhvajā anāya bāre, etc.

Listen to the gospel, just strain your ears. Quick comes the new era through divine dispensation. Before the gates of India, auspicious bands are playing; see, just see, banners of victory are flying everywhere.

Sadhucharan Rai was the printer-publisher of the paper which was printed at the Victoria Press, and controversies were waged between the *Samskāraka* and the *Navasamvāda*. Among the features may be mentioned travel descriptions of a journey through the garjāt—Bāmrā, Lahaḍā, Keonjhar. It contained reviews, *e.g.*, of the *Bodhodaya*, an exact translation of the Bengali book, the Oriya version being published by Hrudaychand Dey; poems, among others, of Bijaychandra Majumdar; *hatāshār svargasvapna*, beginning

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with the line—*Sahasā hrudaya āji kāhinki cpari helā*; there were sensational news items, *e.g.*, like Sadhu Sahu murdering his wife who was ravished by a zamindar Sitanath Ray, Sadhu getting 6 years for it. The Utkal Brahmo Samaj performed its 18th Annual celebration in Ashadh of the year, and there is mention of a chhatra-samaj.

It was an illustrated magazine.

In the issue of 19th June, there is an article on Oriya poetry. It may be summed up as follows

There is hardly anything in Oriya literature before Prataparudra (1504-1532). His contetmporaries were Jagannath and Balaram. Upendra Bhanja was the greatest Oriya poet and he has given an account of himself in the 16th *chhanda* of the Labanyavati. In his *Rasaḷekhā,* he has said that the book was written in the 27th anka of Divyasinha Dev. Now 27 ankas = 21 years. There have been 3 Divyasinhas in the history of Orissa; of them the first only, Divyasinha I, ruled for more than 21 years (1690-1713). Upendra Bhanja's step-brother Krushna Bhanja became the chief, after the death of their father, Nilakantha. Upendra founded a society of friends with similar tastes and tendencies, and the expenses were managed by friendly chiefs. Bhanja wrote *chhandapothis* almost 52 in number, and numerous minor pieces without number. Dinakrushna was a contemporary of his; he was a poet and a Vaishnav, and in a meeting of the two poets Bhanja told him, 'it would have been very good if all your *chhandas* observed the *ka* rule as in your first' Dinakrushna, on his part, pointed out many defects in the *Vaidehīsabiḷāsa.* This led to Bhanja writing his

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*Kaḷā-kautuka.* The poet of *Rasakaḷḷoḷa* was not popular because his eroticism was not strong enough.

The issue of the paper, dated 8th September, contains 5 sayings of Sri Ramkrishna with a lithographed figure of his—'yogi Rāmakrushna Paramahansanka ukti' Visvanatha Kar, Lokanatha Kar, Bholanatha Kar and Balabhadra Kar had prepared a pamphlet on their giving up the thread, and the pamphlet comes up for notice in this paper.

We learn also from the issue of the 9th October, that the homeopathic system of treatment was introduced at Cuttack by Harakumar Gupta of Dacca.

*Chandrabhāgā* and *Nandikeswarī* were both composed in this year.

*The Oḍiā* and the *Navasamvād* were incorporated from the 1st January, 1888, and the first number of the new issue was published for the 4th January. It was the cheapest weekly in Orissa, the annual subscription being Rs. 2/- only.

We learn that Haribhaktipradāyinī and Gorakkhiṇī Sabhas were in existence in Balasore in 1888. We also come across reviews of books like *Saraḷa-padārtha-vijnān* by Jogeshchandra Ray, *Pāchana-sangraha* by Dr. Ramkrishna Ṣahu, *Pāṭigaṇita*, Pt. I, compiled by Chaitanyaprasad Ray, *Bāmaṇḍā-bhūgol* by Jagannath Pattanayak, *Prashnottara-māḷā* (published by Rajnarayan Das), *Gītā-māḷā* by Ramanath Das, *Shankarāchāryya* (in Bengali, by Anangamohan Chakravarti), *Kalikāḷa* by Ramshankar Ray, etc.

There is an account of the Mayurbhanja Chief's family history in the issue of 30th May. We notice also that Raja Shyamananda De Bahadur, born in February, 1817, died while 70 years, 7 months and 2

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days old. About this time (October) a monthly named *Āshā* made its appearance, under the editorship of Sadhucharan Ray, and there was also a paper called *Kaṭaka-samāchāra.*

This was the year also of the *Sāmyabādī*, of which one complete year's file has been seen by me, for the year 1295, Vaishakh to Chaitra, corresponding to 1888-9. It was a monthly journal, devoted to religion, morality and temperance, and distributed gratis, postage only being charged for copies sent to the mofussil. All the articles were in Oriya, only the notices being sometimes in English as well. The first number makes a modest statement "One or two ordinary writers, a very small outlay, just a little help, and very small capital in the form of learning and talents—with these. ." It published a number of short stories from *Gulistan* rendered into Oriya. We learn that the Talcher chief had *Parāshar Sanhitā* translated into Oriya, and then distributed copies among the public, and Lalit Babu the editor (Lalitchandra Chakravarty, Editor and Publisher, Babu Bazar, Cuttack) started a 'samyabādī' school in the College Lane, Cuttack, where boys were prepared for the M.E. and M.V Examinations in Bengali, English and Oriya. The only other contributor besides the editor was Bhupatinath Basu, B.A.

The *Utkaḷa-Prabhā,* edited by Chaitanyaprasad Rai was printed at the Raj Press, Mayurbhanj by permission of His Highness the Chief of Mayurbhanj. The front page ran thus

Utkaḷa-Prabhā
Māsik patrikā o samalochanā
Vaishakh—san 1298.



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Mayurbhanjādhipati Shri Manmahārājā
Shri Rāmchandra Bhanja Deonka
anumatyanusāre
Sri Chaitanyarāyanka dvārā sampādita.

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Sūchipatra

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BARIPADA
Printed at the Raj Press, Mayurbhanj
via Balasore.

The following from the Foreword *Sūchanā* will suffice to give the reader an idea about the aim and object of the paper :

> Oḍiyā bhāshāre prakrutatah sāhitya nāhin boile atyukti heba nāhin. Utkaḷa-sāhitymadhyare Upendra Bhanja, Dīnakrushna Dāsa, Kavi-sūryya Brahma, prabhrutinka khaṇḍadasha Kāvya, Jagannātha Dāsanka Bhāgavata, ebaṃ Saraḷā Dāsanka *Mahābhārata* ehā ki goṭāe jātir sāhityaku lakkha? Puṇi (yeun samasta granthanka nāma kaḷun semānanka madhyare kevaḷa Jagannātha Dāsanka Shrīmadbhāga-vataku chhāḍin āsabudvārā samājara unnati heba dūre thāu, baraṃ adhogati heuchhi etc.

"It will be no exaggeration to say that there is really speaking no literature in Oriya language. In the literature of Orissa can be counted about 10 poems written by Upendra Bhanja, Dinakrushna Dasa, Kavi-sūryyabrahma aṇd others, the *Bhāgavata* by Jagannath

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Dasa and the *Rāmāyaṇa* and *Mahābhārata* of Sarala Dasa; but is that the goal of the literature of a nation? Again, the books named above, *Srimadbhāgavata* by Jagannath Dasa excepted, far from serving the society, are undermining its progress. Of course it has to be admitted that Upendra, Dinakrushna and others were poets of a high order and their works do not lack originality or high seriousness of thought. But the Bhanja poet has churned the ocean in his books and raised to the surface the poison of erotic sentiment. Such works can but serve to spoil the society. That is true literature by studying which the ordinary people of society are roused to their respective sense of duty, and which helps everybody to proper conduct, character-building and social behaviour. The Oriyas have no such literature, and so the society of Utkal has no means of progress. To supply this want, the *Utkaḷa-prabhā* has entered the field."

Though the idea expressed in this foreword will find few responsive echoes to-day—for that matter, it was a wonder how it could find any representative utterance—it is necessary to remember that many promising men rallied to its standard, men who later on won distinction. The first issue contained the beginnings of *Bibāsinī*, Ramshankar Ray's novel; as well as a poem in blank verse (a rarity in those days) by Manicharan Mahapatra, dedicated to Saraswati, the goddess of speech and learning. The second number included, among other noteworthy items, an essay in prose by Viswanath Kar, a poem in blank verse by Kanheyalal Basu, and a lyric poem—*sukhara swapna* or Dream of happiness by Srimati Reba Rai, a relation of Madhusudan Rao's, translated from Bengali and described as the "product of an Oriya girl" There are many other

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things of note, *e.g.*, Radhanath Ray's *Chiḷikā*, Bijaychandra Majumdar's article on *Sāhitya-charchā*, Madhusudan's much-lauded (and deservingly so) poem *Rushiprāṇe Devāvataraṇa*, Ganapati Dasa's article on *Hitavāda* or utilitarianism. The editor, at the year's end, was given out as Rajeswar Mahapatra. The twelfth number of the first year of its issue cites excerpts from works analogous to the *Madla Panji* and preserved in the residence of Krushnachandra Bhramaravara, dewan to the Maharaja of Orissa (?) and belonging to the Khordah Kuḍaḍmall. Contributors wuold be rewarded by the chief for the excellence of their products;—thus Radhanath Ray won Rs. 100/- for his *Chilikā*, Madhusudan Rao Rs. 50/- for the *Rushiprāne Devāvataraṇa*, Bijaychandra Majumdar Rs. 15/- for his essay on *Sāhitya-Charchā*, and Govindachandra Mahapatra Sarma Rs. 100/- for *Himāchal*, Biswanath Babu Rs. 20/- at the rate of Rs. 10/- for each essay. The rewards were, of course, announced in the papers. The second year started with Chandramohan Maharana writing a poem on "Kapilas" and Visvanath Kar jotting down his thoughts on *ananta prem*—Love infinite—in the style of Emerson. But of more topical interest was Lala Ramnarayan Ray's strong critique of Upendra Bhanja in the following style Bhanja fails by the standard of rhetorical devices, having only taken to *sabdālankar* or verbal rhetoric, more often forced than not, and there are mixed metaphors. Secondly, there is too much of the erotic sentiment, which is missing in the originals from which Bhanja is supposed to have taken his cue, and this debases the ideal, an apt example being found in Rama lamenting to Lakshman over Sita's absence. Thirdly, Bhanja fails when measured

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by the standard of taste, *vide* the amours of Chandrabhānu and Lābanyabatī, the dressing for the nuptials of *Premasudhānidhi,* the hideous sports of Subarnarekhā, etc. Fourthly, even if we judge by poetic excellence or craftsmanship, Bhanja is not to be absolved. Such outspoken pronouncement by the writers of *Utkaḷ-Prabhā* announced the rise of a new school of poetry, and that is why these objections have been given in so much detail. It was moreover loudly whispered that Radhanath was at the back of it all. As a matter of fact, Radhanath's *Mahāyātrā* was serially published in this paper, since the 3rd number of the 2nd year, the 4th sarga being published in the 5th number, so much space was given to this popular poem. Ramanatha Dasa's poem *"Prakrutire Brahmadarshan"* and Rudranarayan Sarangi's *Jarāsandhavadha* were other poems worth naming published in this paper during the year. There is an essay named *Mahīsmasūn* by Shivanaryan Nayak which reminds the Bengali reader of Kaliprasanna Ghosh's style. I have not seen *Utkaḷa-Prabhā,* Vol. III. But Vol. IV is there, announcing further progress of Oriya literature. The very first issue of this volume sees the conclusion of *Indumatī* by Gangadhar Meher of Barapali. In the second number, the *Bibāsinī* comes to an end, as well as the 5th sarga of the poem *Jarāsandhavadha.* In the 3rd, appeared a poem *Yayātikeshari* in 5 sargas from an anolymous poet. Still, the paper was fast losing in animation, and issues of the paper would appear even with 2 or 3 contributions only! There is a positive warning in the 3rd number of the 4th year by the Editor :

"We beg to submit to our learned readers that they should send articles suitable for publication for

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the *Utkaḷa-Prabhā,* otherwise its publication will have to be postponed." About this time Gobindachandra Sharma was sending in his translation of the *Mahābhārata* which was being published in the *Utkaḷa-Prabhā* the Adi-Parva was finished, and this translation constituted at this stage the only contribution published in the *Utkaḷa-Prabhā.* This is how the Vol. V. fared; I saw only the Nos. 5-8 published together.

*The Brāhma,* a monthly theistic journal, probably started in 1894; Vol. II, No. 3, is dated March, 1895. Each issue consisted of 4 quarto pages. Articles in English, events and news of the Brahmo Samaj, short paragraphs, "pebbles" (short sayings from George Eliot, John Bright, Blackie, Ruskin, Spurgeon), Selections (larger passages, *e.g.,* from Monier Williams), Oriya poems, advertisements, were there. It was printed and published by V Kar at the Ray Press. "The great mission of the Brahmo Samaj," says the paper, "is to effect a desired reconciliation between the progressive and the revivalistic spirit." The news matter consisted of items like (1) marriage of Babu Hemendranath Bose, 3rd son of Babu Durganarayan Bose of Midnapur with Srimati Bimala, daughter of Babu Bamacharan Ghosh of Bhagalpur on 9th February at Bhagalpur; (2) starting of a Sunday School for young boys and girls by the Utkala Brahma Samaj for impressing them with a high regard for morality and love for God; (3) a widow re-marriage, the parties being Trailoyanath Chakravarti and Kshirodasundari. I have seen only March to July numbers for 1895. One feels curious to know what, incidentally speaking, happened to the Brahmo Benevolent and Co-operative Association, established in 1895.

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The paper gives information about the activities of the Brahmos in Orissa. The 26th Annual Celebration of the Utkal Brahmo Samaj took place on 1st July under the presidentship of Madhusudan Rao, Viswanath Kar being the Secretary, and T. N. Chakravarti a prominent figure. On 10th May a number of Brahmos left their home to go to different places on missionary purpose, and returned on 14th June.

Through the encouragement of the Gaḍjat chiefs they visited Banki, Sonepur, Khandapara, Daspalla, Boud, Talcher, Dhenkanal and other places; prayers and open air meetings were included in the programme, as well as *Hari-sankīrtan, nām-māhātmya,* conversation, etc. There was a *darbar* at Sonepur, and Biswanath Kar and Madhu Babu were the speakers. Bhai Nandalal Banerjee was the speaker at Sambalpur, Biswanath Kar at Bamra, Madhusudan Rao at the Kishorchandra Sahitya Sammilani, Talcher. The party stayed at the residence of Babu Bijaychandra Majumdar for six days. From the annual report of the 26th year of its activities, we learn that the membership amounted to 22 including 8 women members; the previous year's roll contained 24 names, from which 2 were struck off, and 4 added, resulting thus in 26. Apart from this, about a dozen more joined in the prayer. Attendance at the weekly service was about 15 or 16 on an average. There were about 150 subscribers for the paper, and the Brahmos managed the affairs of the Cuttack Town School.

*The Utkaḷa Bandhu* first appeared in August, 1896, edited by Brajabandhu Mishra of Talcher. The magazine had a unique feature; it contained a dedication (which was retained in the different issues) to the chief of Talcher a remarkable evidence of the lingering

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tradition of loyalty to the local chief. The annual subscription was more or less nominal, being twelve annas for the first year, Re. 1-2 for the second which synchronised with 1898, and it was alive also in 1899 when the first issue of the third year was published.

The foreword was optimistic, affirming that Oriya literature was making a progress, though when compared with Bengali that progress might appear to be very slight; in tracing the development it stated further, among other things, that the *Kuṭila Akshar* was the precursor of modern Oriya script, and that the literature originated not during the *regime* of the Kesharis but during that of the Gangas; that the main works of Upendra Bhanja numbered 52, whereas Dinakrushna's, 5; that it was then that Persian words entered the language, and Abhimanyu Samanta Sinha composed his *Vidagdhachintāmaṇi*, when the Marhatta oppression was at its highest.

The *Alochanā*, published from Bamra, was the organ of the Alochana Sabha, and it started in March, 1900. Its editor was Jalandhar Dev and its special attention was towards nature-study and science. Its motto was

> Svamātṛbhāshā vishadībhabantu
> tayaiba hrushyatwatha bandhuvargaḥ
> nānā prabhandhān parito bibhāvya
> bayam krutārthāḥ satatam bhavāmah.

Let one's mother-language be clearer and clearer, and let friends get delighted only with it. Seeing various efforts (in that direction) round about us, may we be always gratified.

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It contained the poetry of Nandakishore Bal and Bholanath Samantarai; and then a dissertation on "if the celestial bodies are inhabited" There is also a notice that "Puran Prakashika Company" published Sarala Dasa's *Mahabharata* when Cuttack Printing Co., began to print many poems.

The quarrel between the *Indradhanu* or *Bijali* and the *Utkaḷa-Prabhā* remains yet to be mentioned. I had the opportunity of consulting one of the leaders in the fight. The *Utkaḷa-Prabhā* had, by its persistent running down of Upendra Bhanja on the score of "offensive taste, obscenities and the like", provoked a retort; this retort took the form of an irregular publication named the *Indradhanu.* The motto affirmed the irregularity of its appearance

> Udaya-upakaraṇa saja heba yebe
> prakāshiba indradhanu tebe kebe kebe.

"When the materials for an appearance will be ready, the *Indradhanu* will then occasionally make its appearance."

Rajakishore Babu, Damodar Pattanayak, Daityariprasad Das were ranged on the side of this paper and vindicated old Oriya poetry and medieval poetry too, against Lala Ramnarayan, Radhanath Babu and others. This added a zest to the discussion and helped the growth of both critical and creative literature.

The *Utkaḷa-Sāhitya*, which appeared for the first time in 1304 *san* corresponding to 1897, laid down its policy in the *Sūchanā* or foreword, to keep to the golden mean of appreciating the new literature while

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realising the value of the old, as the following relevant excerpt will show

> Pāshchātyā shikshāprabhāvare e deshar sakaḷabibhāgare yepari paribartan upasthita hoiachhi, sāhityasambandhare madhya sehipari ghaṭiachhi. E paribartan ekānta bānchhanīya—manushya samāja eka bhāva, eka abasthāre chiradin rahi na pāre. Jībantā samāja pakkhare ehā asahanīya, etc., etc.

"Such change as has appeared in all the departments of life in the country due to western education had occurred also in things relating to literature. This change is very desirable—human society cannot continue in the same state, in the same condition. That would be unbearable for a living society. It is not wise to block the way to progress for the sake of tradition. On the other hand, ignoring the past, or want of confidence in it for the sake of the present, is highly blameable. Those are wise who can steer clear of rocks on both sides. The great men of all civilized ages and advanced countries have been setting forth this ideal. As long as we shall live we shall pursue this policy within our narrow range. Though there may not be many glorious achievements in the literary stores of Ancient Orissa, they are not altogether absent either. On the other hand, attempts by the new age at creative literature are evident to a certain extent. The Utkal Sahitya has come forward in the hope of functioning in a representative capacity for both ancient and modern literature."

The first issues of the new venture were graced with the writings of the stalwarts; these were Phakir

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Mohan Senapati writing a poem on the 'Bhagna Shiva-mandir' or the ruined Siva temple, at the sight of a ruined temple built originally by Lakshman Hajra on the southern side of the Kathjuri and dedicated to the God Mukameswar Madhusudan Rao giving out his spiritual thoughts *adhyātma tattva-chintā* in 4 chapters; Radhanath with his satiric poem *Darbār*.

There were new writers, for example Sadhucharan Ray of Jajpur who was initiated into Bramhoism by Madhusudan Rao and who married Reba Ray. Sadhu-charan was a poet, and died shortly after the starting of the paper; his wife wrote an elegy, but that is another story. Another new writer was Kamapala Mishra, one of the dramatists of Orissa, who also con-tributed verses to this periodical. Only a very small portion of Radhanath's *Ūrvashī* had been published in the *Navasamvād*, it was printed and published in the *Ashaḍh* issue. After 2 years, the *Utkaḷa-Sāhitya* re-counts the present condition of the Oriya literature (the Bhadra number, 1306 Bengali *san*); there were only four newspapers—the *Utkaḷa Dīpikā*, *Samvāda-bāhikā*, *Hitaishiṇī* and *Navasamvād*. Most of the articles were simply translations from English or Bengali. The monthlies were three, *Utkaḷa-Sāhitya*, *Utkaḷa Bandhu* and the *Utkaḷa-Prabhā*, and so on—on through the years into more and more glory of execution.

This account of Oriya periodical literature will be incomplete without any mention of the *Mukur* ably edited by Brajasundar Ḍas, and the life-long devoted service to the *Utkaḷa-Sāhitya* by Viswanath Kar, and, in more recent times, the *Sahakār*. These have reflected the condition of modern Oriya literature and have also largely helped in its creation. The Oriya

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periodical was a new form influenced by the west, and at the same time it was a medium for new writing which brought into play the creative faculties of the people.

* After *Utkaḷa-Dīpikā* had put in an appearance from Cuttack, there was a move from Balasore to start a paper named the *Bodhadāyinee eban bāleshwar samvād-bāhikā*, the *bodhadāyinee* to be concerned with literary matters and the other half to deal with news items. This is learnt from Senapati's autobiography. About fifty subscribers could be got together, of whom only 8 or 10 paid in full.

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CHAPTER III

# RADHANATH RAY (1848-1908) THE HIGH PRIEST IN MODERN ORIYA POETRY

A writer of text books—the *Mahāyātrā*—romances in verse—experiment in prose fiction—his influence.

The modern age in Oriya literature bears the name and impress of one who, in spite of the engrossing duties that public service entailed on him, persisted in serving the literature of his province with a sincere devotion and remarkable tenacity, succeeding at last in lifting it out of its accustomed ways and bringing to it the glory and freshness of a new life. This remarkable achievement was possible because he had the gifts requisite for the work his name was Radhanath Ray.

In considering the modern period of Oriya literature the most important figure before the reader is his. For more than forty years he shone in the firmament of the literature of his country, and the literature of today owes a good deal to his practice and principles. He was an educationist and the author of geographical treatises like *Bhūgola* (written jointly with Sivanarayan Nayak and published from Balasore, 1877-78), and *Bhūgola-Sāra-Sangraha* (jointly with Bhimacharana Panda and published from Balasore, 1878). He had translated *Meghadūtam* into Oriya in 1874. Blumhardt also mentions a book of verses, *Kavitāvālī*, by Madhusudan Rao and Radhanath Ray in 1876, published from Balasore. Next year we find *Kshetra-tattva* or a treatise on geometry, mensuration and surveying, jointly by

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Radhanath Ray and Shivanarayan Nayak, issued from Balasore in 1877. His *Ādarsha Prashnāvalī* was published in 1876 from Balasore, and the 2nd edition in 1878 (Blumhardt's Catalogue). But the important thing about him is not text books made to order, but creative writings of a high order. It is therefore necessary to treat his works in detail, and to dwell on specific instances of the influences of the times manifested in his writings.

If we put side by side an entire poem or a few lines from the *Typical Selections from Oriya Literature*, Vol. I, published by the Calcutta University, that is, any poem in the early and medieval period of Oriya literature, and some lines of Radhanath's *Mahāyātrā*, we find at once a very great change. Though the words and the script are the same, yet there is an advance or enlargement of ideas and thoughts, accompanied by new powers and forms of expression. Let us consider the invocation of Radhanath's poem :

> Pankajabāsini devi, utkaḷa bhārati
> Sāraḷe, ki kale, kaha, kurucuḍāmaṇi,
> shuṇile yekāḷe vīra vārtāvahamukhe
> Prabhāse yādabaṃkara, etc.

We at once perceive that we have left far behind us the simple verse machinery of the *Koili* poems, the vast background of the *Rāmāyaṇa* as well as the complex prosody and the gorgeous imagery, sometimes reflected through the verbal jugglery of the *chhāndas*. In short, we have come to a measure, blank verse (or verse without rhyme), which was at first regarded with suspicion as foreign to the spirit of Indian languages.

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Strange as it may now seem, it was persistently believed that our national poetry could not be dissociated from the jingling of rhyme because as a nation we are musically disposed. It was Michael Madhusudan Datta of Bengal who first showed that the new form hallowed by Milton in English literature was quite capable of being adapted to the needs of the vernaculars of India and Radhanath followed in his wake and wrote blank verse in Oriya. Madhusudan Rao, Radhanath's life-long friend in literature and other matters, pointed out his friend's contribution in this respect in the preface that he wrote to the poem :—

"Utkaḷa kāvyare amitrachhanda prabartanare ehi prathama shubhaprayāsa. Ethipurve bangīya kavivara srī Māikel Madhusūdan Datta bangaḷā padyara prakruti o niyama ālochanā kari ehi chhandaku pravartita karithile (Kavi Rādhānāthanka) chhaḍā annakauṇasi utkaḷīya lekhaka ehi chhāndara yathāyatha prayoga bishayare dakkhatā dekhāi pārante nāhin."

"This is the first happy attempt to introduce blank verse in Oriya poems. Before this, the Bengali poet, Michael Madhusudan Datta, introduced it to Bengali after carefully weighing the nature and laws of Bengali poetry. Excepting the poet Radhanath, no other Oriya writer has been able to show a capacity for correctly using this measure."

Apart from the measure, what strikes us at the very outset is that the dedication in the first few lines is addressed not to any orthodox deity in an orthodox fashion but to an orthodox deity, the goddess Sāraḷā,

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in a new fashion, which reminds one of Milton's devout prayer to the Heavenly Muse in the third book of the *Paradise Lost* to help him in his winged flight.

In the third place, in this narrative poem we are plunged directly into the action of the story, and this is also a new feature for which we might go to Milton or even to Homer, both of whom began their books with their important characters in a critical stage, and unthreading the narrative informed their readers about the particulars and identities of the gods or persons they were describing.

In the *Mahāyātrā* the poet was trying his hand at epic composition; not an epic in the sense of the Sanskrit Mahakavyas, nor might the term be applied to the *Rāmāyaṇā* and the *Mahābhārata*, nor can we extend the term to include the purāṇas which contained materials for numerous epics. We shall discuss the matter so that the distinctive features of the new form which Radhanath wanted to introduce may appear in all its implications. When we consider everything, we have to conclude that it was unfortunate for Radhanath to have broken off before he came to the end, but it must be said that it was a remarkable attempt in spite of its obvious incompleteness.

The Sanskrit Purāṇas are lengthy compositions, purporting to be the chronicles of the world, so to speak. They contain germs of many epics we find in them many epic ideas and situations which can be developed later on into full-fledged epic poems. Their canvas is vast, their characters are numerous, their grandeur is too grand even for epic representation in their entirety, we can break them piecemeal and then present the fragments to successive poets for exercising their talents upon. The Sanskrit *Rāmāyaṇā* and the

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*Mahābhārata* also are lengthy compositions and serve in an equal measure as source books for epics. They contemplate recording the history of many important families, but their aim is comparatively restricted to one definite and individual dynasty. The *Mahākāvyas*, again, have to conform to certain characteristics : there must be a hero, well-born, generous, and with his antagonist almost of the same calibre there should be pleasant descriptions of hills and dales, mountains and groves, the seasons, etc. ; there should be a fixed number of cantos, and the style and metre should not be monotonously uniform but there should be provision for a little variety. Let us, however, consider how the *Mahāyātrā* fares in relation to these rules. There is at least no variety of metre because it is in blank verse throughout. Of descriptions, to be sure, it has enough, and the hero's antagonist is not yet to be seen sketched or outlined, but we must remember that the work is an unfinished product, at the same time there is no scope for such a creation. The new note that may be detected and that increases the worth of the book is the patriotic motive, and the patriotism of the sort is a tendency developed in us through our contact with the west. Along with this, there is a conscious modelling on literary products of Europe, on Virgil and Milton in particular, and in this modelling it is quite possible Radhanath's intimate acquaintance with the works of Michael Madhusudan, the Bengali Poet, may have helped a good deal.

An important feature of the poem is the place occupied by Orissa. There has been a new orientation in her physical geography.

Thus in the second canto the poet with consummate skill makes the Pandavas turn to Orissa in course



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of their 'final journey', which latter incident explains the title of the poem. His motive is to use his gifts in describing the topography of the country and extol its beauties and glories. The fire-god who receives the homage of the Pandavas lives in secret in the Nilachala, and the lakes Saroh and Chilika are but remnants of the ocean which receded at the order of the ocean god, after it had overflowed into the shore when the Sudarshan Chakra sank down into the sea. Hence more importance attaches to Chakratirtha at Puri, and the name of the country itself receives a new interpretation. It may be a digression, but at the same time it is proper to observe here, that Radhanath's poem *Chilikā* is composed in couplets which are sometimes non-stop verses and the poem is in itself a new type, due to western models a topographical poem in its entirety, full of minute touches of description, with an independent interest of its own.

The whole of the third canto consists of poetic descriptions of Orissa the coast of the Mahanadi flowing in the east, the mount Kapilas and the mount Malyavanta, all hoary with time and threaded by streams. The fire-god takes the Pandavas round the different territories acting as their guide. Even such ordinary place-names as Tangi are idealised by a legendary touch, and an air of popular philology. What is remarkable in these descriptions, in which the poet frequently indulges recurring again and again to the historical and natural grandeur of the land, is an attempt at reconstructing the Pauranic legends, at associating every inch of Orissa with something hallowed in history or religion. It seems that Radhanath studied Oriya pretty much in the same way as Scott studied Scotland, the

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*motif* of his poetry is directly or indirectly patriotic, and the result is to be seen in details of workmanship.

In the next canto (the fourth) we are introduced to the Kaliyuga which has just begun, and which could be visualised by the Pandavas because of their pure nature

> Sattvaguṇojjvala eka tumbhara lochane
> bhātiba se divya jyoti.
> "Only before your eyes, bright with the virtue of truthfulness,
> Will flash that divine light."

Before them lay the assembly of gods—Dharma, Satya, Nyāya, Tapaḥ, Sāma, Dayā, Shaucha, Titikshā, Ārjaba, Padmālayā, Saraswati—all these are described in a concrete form and a vivid manner with the additional statement of a prophecy that these gods will disappear, and India, the land of Bharat, will pass through very rough times. It might be pointed out in this connection that in this metaphorical description of the gods and goddesses Radhanath does not take his stand on legendary history, but his basis is a new puritan philosophy which is more or less made free by western influence and in which Dharma, Sāhasa, Satya, Nyāya, Tapaḥ, Shaucha, Titikshā, and Ārjaba are decked out in human form in characteristic poses. Such free handling of the divine assembly cannot be wholly attributed to a thoroughly conservative temperament, and Radhanath in his poetic craftsmanship certainly looks away far from inherited literary tradition. This view is confirmed by the figures of Lust and Anger, Avarice and Illusion, Pride and Murder, Jealousy and Falsehood, Deception, Faction and Sloth that are next

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introduced, and it is to be remembered that the stage is always confined to Bhārat on which there is a free fight resulting in the overthrow of Dharma and the victory of Kali. Let us conclude an account of this canto with its last five lines which remind the reader of the Bengali poet Hemchandra's recurring note on India's moral degradation at the present day, though the natural phenomena of the country continue to be the same as before :

> sehi des'a, sehi giri, sehi nadanadī
> nagara, nagarī, tīrtha, āshramadi kari,
> sarve thile pūrvapari. Mānabe kebala
> nāmare mānaba rahi, pashu ṭhāru hīna
> hoi jibe yugadharme bhārata maṇḍale.

> "The same country, the same hills. rivers and streams the same,
> Cities and towns, holy places and hermitages,
> Everything shall continue as before; man only
> Worse than a beast, human only in semblance,
> ——A strange result of the time-spirit in the land of Bharata."

Western influence on the remaining cantos of the poem is mainly contained in a new appeal to patriotism which modifies the tone of court poetry. In the tribute of praise justly offered by the poet to Ramchandra Bhanja, the Chief of Mayurbhanja State, which begins the fifth canto, a puritanic note is heard. There is something new in poetry when praise is given to sexual restraint and beneficent rule of the Chief, far removed from the half-adulatory, half-amatory verses associated with the poet's homage to things, and though the ideal

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of Ramchandra, the hero of the *Rāmāyaṇa,* may be brought forward as the possible source of this eulogy (whence the similarity in name) one would like to trace it to our newly awakened idea of responsible government. Western or eastern, this portion is however merely dedicatory. In the main body of this canto we find Yudhisthira very much perturbed over the ills of Bharatabhumi. He feels like one whose own house has suddenly caught fire

> Daive yebe dekhe banhi atumancha tale
> gruhapati, kātara se huai jesane......

> "When perchance the master of the house,
> Descries fire beneath the eaves, grief seizes
> His heart, similarly........."

Eagerly he asks the Fire-God with tears in his eyes

> Prabhu, trikāḷa darashi
> tumbhe jenu, kaha mote kirūpe bhārate
> ghaṭiba e mahānartha sujalā suphalā
> e shasyashyāmalā dharā parahāte dei
> parapadānata ki he hebe āryyasute?

> "Lord, all the time and all the space
> Stands revealed to your gaze; tell me how
> This calamity will fall on India. This country,
> Of beautiful streams and herbage, will the Aryan line
> Give it up to others and live as slaves?"

The reply that Agni gives to this query shows with what avidity the poet must have imbibed the know-

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ledge of Indian History from western sources. He would trace all the evils of India, including her political servitude, to the loss of her spiritual fire which went out just as Brahminism rose and snuffed the soul out of her by laying over a huge burden of rituals and ceremonies. The whole world seemed to be couped up within the four corners of India, untouchability spread like a curse and a pestilence, and Lust and Sloth and Jealousy made the land an easy prey to designing foes. Radhanath attacks the educational system built on the aphorism of Chaṇakya—shlokarūpe shikhāibe ehi bhīru nīti—"this cowardly temper will be taught through slokas"—and he also looks askance at the different provinces on account of their provincialism—ākhyāye pruthaka mātra, rakte sarve eke—"separate only in name, equal in blood they are all."

The novelty of Radhanath's *Mahāyātrā* was mainly due not so much to its historicity or its great and noteworthy attempt to relate the national epic of the Hindus, the *Mahābhārata*, to the land of Orissa, but to the new measure of blank verse which, like heady wine, appealed very strongly to the appreciative readers of poetry in Orissa. Sanskrit verse is quantitative. It does not depend for its measure upon the concurrence, or otherwise, of the final syllables at rhythmic and regular intervals; the caesura or *Yati* is regulated by definite rules but may not follow the sense, as in blank verse. So far as lyrics go, Sanskrit measure is an excellent medium. But in epics, which are works of some length, it is bound to pall upon the reader after a time. Hence the ancient law-makers in Sanskrit poetry, who were definite in their instructions on these matters, laid down that the different *sargas* of an epic poem were to be written in different metres, and even

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in the same *sarga* or canto or book, the final verses were to be written in a measure different from the body of the *sarga*. When Madhusudan Dutt introduced blank verse to the Bengali language, he did it at first on the spur of the moment, half in jest and half in earnest, conscious of the fire that burned in him. He tried the measure first in a dramatic work, then in a long poem, and at last in that immortal work, the *Meghnādbadh.* Even that work was, to quote his own word for it, an 'epicling', not a finished, complete epic. But he succeeded all the same in grafting his blank verse on the Bengali language. He declared, in answer to enquiries received from numerous quarters regarding the source of his innovation, that he had caught the rhythm of the blank verse from Milton. No doubt he was indebted for the dignity and spiritual content of the poem to Homer, but it is very probable that, for the mechanism of his verse, he turned to Milton as to a master.

When Radhanath wrote his *Mahāyātrā* he was probably thinking of Madhusudan's *Meghnādbadh,* a poem written about 40 years before Radhanath thought of his blank verse venture. The similarity between the two is striking. Like Madhusudan, Radhanath's first exercises in verse were in a language which enjoyed more prestige in his society than his own mother-tongue. As in the case of Madhusudan, it was to a distinguished educationist to whom Radhanath looked for approbation and who advised him to a better course. As with Madhusudan, so with Radhanath, the projected epic was not completed. The *Meghnādbadh* was merely an experiment; an 'epicling' In the introduction to the epic *Mahāyātrā,* contributed by Madhusudan Rao, Radhanath's friend and literary adviser, there is a

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gentle hint that so far as the medium of blank verse was concerned, the cue was taken from Madhusudan Datta of Bengal.

The new measure owed its success not only to its freedom from rhyme, but also to the dignity of diction which resounds in close correspondence to the content of the poem. But we cannot say that Radhanath's work sustains always, as in the case of Madhusudan, the dignity of the epic so far as diction goes. Something is no doubt due to the difference in the genius of the two languages. Both of course are deeply indebted to Sanskritic diction, or *tatsama* words, for their vocabulary. But take the first few lines of the second *sarga* of *Mahāyātrā*. The style is not so dignified, the syntax not so closely knit, the harmony not so solemn as in the case of Madhusudan's great work. Comparisons of particular lines are bound to be more or less misleading, and, for a general estimate, the best thing is to depend upon an impression, rather than a detailed examination of the two texts side by side; the latter has not been undertaken as yet, but it must ultimately decide the question at issue.

It may be advisable, however, to refer to certain passages in the *Meghnādbadh* for examples of the sonorous and epic diction of Madhusudan. Let us look up the third canto of the Bengali poem, where Pramila's companion reaches the western gate of Lanka

> Katakshaṇe uttarilā pashchima-duāre
> vidhumukhī, ekebāre shata shankhadhārī
> dhvanilā, ṭankāri roshe shata bhīma dhanu,
> strī-vṛnda! Kānpilā Lankā ātanke; kānpila
> mātange nishādī; rathe rathī; turangame
> sādīvara; simhāsane rājā; avarodhe, etc.

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The sound is not only an echo to the sense, but is also helpful in elevating the temper of the reader, lifting it up to a higher level of life and the imagination. Or take a single line in the same canto where Hanuman is sternly greeted by Pramila's companion *Kodaṇḍa ṭankāri roshe kahilā hunkāre.* It is a perfect line, resonant with epic energy and diction. Madhusudan's achievement is all the more wonderful, when we remember and realise that Sanskrit, and for that matter Bengali, was a new language to him. The arrangement of words with a view to eliciting a deep musicality from them was thus a feat which can be explained only by attributing it to the poet's genius; we have to understand once again and in a new sense, that poets are born, not made. It is not possible to find out in Radhanath's poem that rise and fall of words which one learns to associate with Madhusudan. Radhanath knew his Sanskrit and his Oriya all right, he had not the handicap under which Madhusudan might be imagined to have laboured; but at the same time it must be acknowledged in all fairness that it is not open to all to bend the bow of Ulysses. In vain do we look into his verses for the harmony which comes from a march of words answering to some deep-seated tune which must always come from the poet's heart. Madhusudan, it must be admitted, was a master in the art of weaving his words into a *murchchhanā,* the *āroha* and *abaroha* of words came so natural to him.

In the introduction to the *Mahāyātrā* contributed by the poet's friend Madhusudan Rao already referred to, an introduction which should be read by all students of the Oriya epic, there are two statements which require some observation; one is his note that all the poems written in Sanskrit have been composed in vari-



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ous *amitrākshar* chhandas; this in our opinion is out of place so far as Sanskrit goes, because in Sanskrit verse there is no question of rhyme and its absence, the verse (as we have said) being quantitative in nature. The other remark of Madhusudan Rao which also may be open to criticism is in reference to the possibility of there being unpoetic utterances in rhyme. This remark is later on corrected by the distinguished writer who affirms that poetry does not depend for its excellence either on rhyme or on blank verse. Certainly it is the "divine right" of poetasters to exhibit their "gifts" both in rhyme and blank verse.

Radhanath was the pioneer in introducing blank verse to Oriya language, and it is therefore necessary to study the innovation and its nature in comparison to the great Bengali pioneer, Madhusudan, who supplied Radhanath with a model. Madhusudan Datta's fame in this respect was fairly noised abroad; Bhudeb Mookerji, who acted as a mentor to Radhanath at a critical period of his life, was an intimate friend of the Bengali poet, having been associated with him in close intimacy since their school days. Madhusudan Rao in his introduction also stresses the closeness of the two languages, Bengali and Oriya. These are the external factors, while the internal resemblances between the Bengali and the Oriya epic will go further to establish the case for Datta's influence on the Oriya poet.

As has been already said, besides the *Mahāyātrā*, Radhanath wrote a number of small romances, all in the manner of Byron's verse tales. *Kedār-Gaurī*, *Chandrabhāgā*, *Nandikeshwarī*, *Ushā* and *Pārvatī*, these five form a class by themselves. Of these, the first

* Paramananda Acharyya's articles in the *Utkala-Sāhitya*.

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is a simple tale of love between two young people, boy and girl, that grew and lived side by side, and it is most pathetic in its tragic end. The two lovers made an appointment but there was a tiger lurking near the *rendezvous*, resulting in a misunderstanding and consequent consecutive suicide by both. There is hardly any room for doubt that Chaucer's *Pyramus and Thisbe* (*Legend of Good Women*)* acted as the model to this denouèment, though there are many fine touches throughout the poem, illustrating the poet's art and originality, and the susceptibility of an Oriental mind. As it happens, the name is taken from a well-known spring at Bhubaneswar, which is described in the poem as the *rendezvous*, whence the name. The originality of the poet is amply borne out by many lines of Eastern imagery and local description; thè reader may be at random referred to the calf-love between the boy and the girl, their beauty which had made each suited for the other, their resolution to go out into the world in the disguise of a monk and a nun, professing love (Premar sannyāsī sannyāsinī); the appearance of the girl first on the spot and her fright at the sight of a tiger dripping the blood of a stag just killed; the subse-

ll. 51-61 in the English poem :—
Thus wolde they seyn :—"Allas, thou wikked walle!
Through theyn envye thow us lettest alle!
Why nyltow cleve, or fallen al atwo?
Or at the laste, that thow wouldest so,
Yit woldestow but ones let us meete,
Or oones that we myghte kyssen sweete,
Than were we covered of oure cares colde.
But natheless, yit be we to the holde,
In as muche as thou suffrest for to goon
Our wordes thurgh thy lyme and eke thy stoon,
Yet oghte we with the ben wel apayde.
Cf. the ll. in Oriya poem—verse 12 and next two :—
Kahanti kānthaku—nidaruṇ! ethi keu baḍapaṇa tora?
tanuru tanuku antara kari tu labhibu dushkruta ghora.

They say to the wall—Cruel! where is thy greatness?
By separating us thou shalt be guilty of a heinous offence.

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quent advent of Kedar who commits suicide, under a mistake, Gauri following suit.

So powerful and popular has been the poem of Radhanath that it has at once sunk into the mass mind; a stranger visiting Bhubaneswar may be regaled with the version of the name of the spring as Radhanath gives it; questions into the proper place may elicit the fact that what Radhanath wrote about it was wholly his own version. Pandit Artaballabh Mahanti utters a timely warning which might be interpreted into a censure, about such ways of 'misleading' the public mind and changing legends.

*Chandrabhāgā* is another verse-tale. In it the heroine is the daughter of a sage named Sumanyu. Her beauty attracts the sun-god who follows her with entreaties and solicitations, but she does not relent, does not slacken her steps, and she runs away from him in mortal terror. The god is, however, in hot pursuit and at last she is swallowed up by the sea. The discomfiture of the god is prompted by Kāmadeva (Cupid) who, reviled by him in contemptuous terms for his softness, is ever on the watch, and shoots two arrows at the pair,—the arrow at the sun-god calculated to inspire love, and that at the maiden to inspire hatred. The denouement synchronises with the sudden ruin that overtakes the temple at Konarak, which thus acts as the *deux-ex-machina,* once so popular with a school of dramatists and novelists in Europe. In this instance also it should be carefully investigated how far the poet has invented, and how far he has built on foundations already in existence. To one not acquainted with the local tradition it is very tempting to identify the story with the legend of "the God pursuing, the maiden hid,"—the story of Daphne and Apollo, rendered memor-

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able in so many classical references. While Daphne was changed into a laurel tree at her urgent entreaties, the Indian girl's importunate pleadings to her mother resulted in her being changed into a small stream absorbed into the sea. As usual, Radhanath's local touches have made the poem into a new thing altogether by his numerous references to the religious faith and historical incidents of Orissa. The name of the poem is taken from a river that flows by Konarak and that has to be crossed by visitors from Puri to the now ruined, but most beautiful, temple dedicated to the sun-god. Radhanath has thus excellently woven together the local legend and its western counterpart so that the borrowing, as in all other cases where he is the maker, seems so natural.

Radhanath's *Pārvatī*, in two cantos, has been likewise compared to classical works and Shakespearean dramas; the *Iliad* has been mentioned as having prompted the idea, and it has been discussed how far *Pārvatī* approximates to Aeschylus or Shakespeare. Radhanath may have borrowed from both; the ghost and the Ophelia incident may have been taken from Hamlet, and the Kanchuki from the watch of Aeschylus. But Radhanath takes for the basis of his work a description of some local customs and an account of the Economic Geography of the land. The incest—a father's passion for his own daughter on whom he begot a son—points to Shelley's *Cenci* as a possible source. The child was killed and the hungry mother Kaushalya starved to death with dark hints as to her having been made to feast on the corpse of her son on

Paramananda Acharyya's articles in the *Utkala-Sāhitya*. The poem itself is incomplete, but there is extant a rough sketch of the narrative prose; perhaps the author had intended to shape it into verse later on.

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the top of Dhauli. There is also the supernatural element, the tragic ghost of the sorely tried daughter appearing before her mother for revealing everything in connection with the crime. The rich allusiveness of the poem is not the least of its characteristics.

In considering Radhanath's *Yayāti-Kesharī* in connection with the western influence, we notice the following[1] which will be of interest if we compare the plot and treatment of a similar subject in Shakespeare's *Cymbeline*

(1) A step-mother's aversion for the step-children.

(2) The twins, specially the sister Bimalā, habituated to the male dress and manly pursuits.

(3) Chance meeting at the temple.

(4) The prince takes a fancy to Bimalā in male attire, but is disillusioned.

(5) Supernatural aid—the disguise, and the night in the cave with Lalitā.

(6) The secret gets out and the discovery of the intrigue.

(7) Yayati is charged and sentenced to death by the king.

(8) Yayati prefers death in a combat with seven best warriors because he is a Kshatriya.

(9) Divine intervention by dreams.

(10) Happy ending.

(11) Though *Sringār ras* or erotic sentiment prevails in Radhanath's *Yayāti-Kesharī*, yet it is not so extreme as it is in Upendra Bhanja, it suits our modern taste, and our modern taste means a good deal of the influence of western taste. As a matter of fact, it fanned the flame of literary controversy of the times by inviting comparison with Upendra Bhanja's style.

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The story of *Ushā* is not by itself a direct imitation or a grafting of any western story or legend on a liberal scale, but it seems to have been taken largely from one of the annals of Rajasthan compiled by Tod. In a country where primitive conditions exist, where hunting is a chief pastime, it is nothing surprising that a prince like Jayanta should come across a girl like Usha equally proficient in hunting and marksmanship only this Usha must not be a princess but an ordinary village maiden though when her parentage will be examined, her noble birth will be evident to all. This is the way in which Tod has taken his story from local sources. The race item of the story has been taken from Greek legends; we may compare "Atalanta's Race," where the same artifice was used to get rid of a superior rival. Neither the hunt nor the race can, with any shadow of reality, be associated with a princess of Orissa. The very idea is preposterous. But Radhanath in his usual way has created a new legend altogether, giving it a local colouring and associating it with local names and traditions so that it seems to be a thoroughly traditional poem; for this, again, the constructive genius of Radhanath is responsible. In a poem of 838 lines, he has wedded romance to traditional form, and eventually Usha and Jayanta turn out to be Tilottama and Chitraratha of the Gandharvas, degraded to earth through Kali's curse.

The story of the poem *Nandikeshwarī* has come to close grips with history; no longer are we to be troubled with legends and legendary accounts but with the dim beginnings of history where our tread is firmer and surer; but when we examine the poem, there is an astonishing similarity between the Oriya poem and Lord Byron's *Siege of Corinth* both as regards subject-

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matter and the measure of the verse. Surely the motive in the Oriya poem is not the same as in the English; Choḍaganga is the conqueror, and his primary motive is the conquest of the country, not securing the hand of any lady, however rich and beautiful. Both the poems end with a sense of tragedy; but while Alp in *The Siege of Corinth* is a human being, given to love and hate, with whom all is fair in love and war, Choḍaganga is a being of a superior order—at least superior to the "folly' of love.

In the *Venisanhār*, the inspiration was eastern but the form of expression was a western influence. Radhanath like all true sons of mother India followed the original *Mahābhārat* in picking out the theme of his poem *Venisanhar*. But he was of the times, and acted according to the demands of his age. The modern age wanted to see the same old story of *Mahābhārat* from a new angle of vision and Radhanath supplied his *Venisanhār* to suit the new taste. There are many smaller pieces of poetic effort to Radhanath's credit. The longest of them is *Darbār* in which he indulges in his comments on the modern times and the holding of a *darbār*, contrasting the ceremony of the present with that of the past. He admires the past and his disgust at the present is patent.

*Chiḷikā*, a topographical poem, stands out against the rest by reason of its beautiful appreciation of nature's gifts. Lines from it are recited even by schoolboys of today.

Radhanath had been the pioneer also in modern Oriya Kathā-Sāhitya in prose. His Young Italian (*itālīya yuvā*) was first published in the *Utkaḷ Durpun*, a Balasore paper, in 1877. He was the forerunner in this of Ramshankar, Jagamohan, Phakirmohan and

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others, whose novels and dramas have made notable contribution to modern Oriya literature. Ramshankar's *Kānchikāverī* (a drama) and *Vivāsinī* (a novel), Jagamohan's *Bābāji* (a farce) and Phakirmohan's *Revatī* (a story), all appeared after 1881.

Radhanath has finished some poems, left others incomplete, but his total achievement commands respect, apart from the fact that he gave a helpful push to the emergence of modern Oriya literature, on which account his influence, more than his own composition, should come in for notice in the history of Oriya literature. But, when all is said, let us remember the query which he puts at the end of the poem *Ushā*

Kīrti-kīṭa kāḷa keun kīrti-prati nuhai bāma?

To which achievement is Time, the great canker-worm of fame, not averse?

Radhanath has been silent these forty years; his voice has stopped through death. The impulse which he roused in the literature of Orissa has not found an equally fertile soil, but may be seen in the verses of some of his younger contemporaries like Sadhucharan Ray, Nandakishore Bal, Chintamani Mahanti. Sadhucharan died young, but he had shown sufficient promise of poetic worth before his death, and had received encouragement from the senior poet; Nandakishore distinguished himself in historical and nature poetry; and Chintamani still lives, to offer model and guidance to younger generations. Poetry is cultivated, and still prevailingly, along western lines of culture, but the rosy dawn has faded away, and along with it the promise of infinite greatness, or more properly, grandeur.



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## CHAPTER IV

# MADHUSUDAN RAO THE NEW LYRIC AND PROSE IN ORIYA

Account of his life, and influences which moulded him—Contributions to periodicals—Chronological account of his writings—Short stories—Lyrics—Spirituality and patriotism—Metrical experiments—Songs—Affiliation to Sanskrit—Summing up.

Madhusudan Rao (January 29, 1853—December 28, 1912) came from a Maratha stock domiciled in Orissa before British rule began. He was born at Puri; his father Bhagirath Rao served in the Police Department. When Madhusudan was five years old, his mother died at childbirth giving birth to Jagannath, the younger brother of Madhusudan. His early training was first at the village pathsala at Gop, and next at Bhubaneswar M.E. School, where his father had been transferred. In a short time he got a seat in Puri Zilla School, where he soon became the favourite of all, carrying away the prizes and gaining the golden opinion of his teachers. Early in life he had dreamt himself looking at the God Siva on a high mountain; and the vision he carefully tended in his mind—who knows if it had not coloured his views on life and religion! When he was a student of the 2nd class, Radhanath joined the school as its second teacher, and the new teacher was very much impressed by the young student, and helped him in his lessons. Thus began a life-long friendship memorable in the annals of literary friendship. Both studied Sanskrit with Pandit Harihar Das, the distinguished scholar of Orissa. Madhusudan had already married; he was detained in

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the Entrance class for 3 years, once on account of the great famine, another year for his own health, and only in the third chance, in 1869, he passed with credit and joined the F.A. Classes of Cuttack High School. He dreamed of the Holy Light; and his social work began when in 1866 he came forward to join the volunteer organisation for distributing rice among the famine-stricken. Influenced as a student by Sj. Haranath Bhattacharyya, his professor of Philosophy in the College, and no doubt strengthened in his new faith by his contact with Pratapchandra Majumdar who came to Cuttack on invitation from Haranath Babu and delivered a few sermons, he later on embraced Brahmoism and with him was associated his friend Pyarimohan. Both were to win distinction in later life. The religious aspect of his life was never dormant. His character commanded universal homage, and we are told that Dwijendralal Ray, the well-known poet of Bengal, was reminded of Ramtanu Lahiri on seing him, while Pandit Sivanath Sastri called him a second Vidyasagar. He was catholic in his outlook, and never yielded to sectarian narrowness; but at the same time his zeal never flagged, and his verses always contained the flavour of the Upanishadic *sādhanā*—the mystic feeling of intimacy with the Great Being.

Madhusudan passed his F.A. Examination in 1871, and this marked the end of his academic career as his father would not hear of his going to Calcutta, a step necessary then for prosecuting further studies, as there was no provision for B.A. teaching in Cuttack. Thus deprived of all opportunities for higher education, he entered the education department on a salary of Rs. 45 p.m. and as the headmaster of the M. E. School, Jaipur. He was then only 18 years old. It was here

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that he first met with Phakirmohan Senapati, and struck a friendship lasting for about 40 years. From Jajpur he was taken to Balasore and employed there as the 2nd Teacher of the Zilla School. On 29th October, 1873, he entered Government Service. Radhanath was then posted at Balasore as the Deputy Inspector of Schools. Phakirmohan was in the same town, busy editing *Samvādabāhikā*. The organ of the centre was *Utkaļ Darpaņ* to which both Radhanath and Madhusudan contributed translations from English and Sanskrit. It was in this periodical that *Ayodhyā Pratyāgamana* and *Praņayara adbhuta pariņāma* came out; these were followed by his *Nishīthа chintā*, *nirjana-dvīpe nirvāsitar vilāp*, *smasān* and *sūryya*, *ulkā pinda*, *āgneya giri*, *shāsan praņālī* in prose. These formed part of his *Prabandha-māļā* published by him later on, in obedience to the Government's demand for text-books for which rewards were proclaimed. After two years' work at Balasore, he was posted to Cuttack High School as an additional teacher, promoted to be the second teacher there after one year's work. In 1876 Ravenshaw College was started and the High School became Ravenshaw Collegiate School. After 3 years' work there, be became Deputy Inspector of Schools in Cuttack on Rs. 100 p.m. But it is not of his official career that we want to speak; rather, of his personality, of his hopes and desires, whatever their worth may be, of his way of looking at things, and of his literary works.

Madhusudan's writings have been thus chronologically arranged in the preface to the collected works published in 1915 :—

1873 Prāņayara adbhuta pariņāma.
1873-74 Kavitāvalī, in two parts.

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|---|---|
| 1880-81 | Chhāndamāḷā, Part I. |
| 1894-95 | Sāngītamāḷā, Part I. |
| 1895-96 | Sāngītamāḷā, Part II. |
| 1897 | Hema-māḷā. |
| 1901 | Bāḷa-rāmāyaṇa (Incomplete). |
| | Vasanta-gāthā. |
| 1903 | Kusumānjaḷi. |
| 1907-8 | Uttara-rāma-charita. |
| 1908 | Maharshi Devendranāth Thākur. |
| | Utkaḷa-gāthā. |
| 1912 | Bāmaṇḍā-rāja-prashasti, shoka-shloka; |
| | Himachaḷe Udaya-utsava. |
| 1908-12 | Miscellaneous poems published generally in the *Utkaḷa-Sāhitya.* |

Taking up his first efforts, we find that in *praṇayara adbhuta pariṇāma,* Madhusudan wrote a short story 'Love's strange end' was an adaptation of a Sicilian tale. Henry, Prince of Sicily, was kept at Belmont. His father, the younger brother of the king, had been put to death by royal decree, so to speak, as he had died in prison. Henry's only aunt, Constantia, had a daughter, Diana, brought up at the royal household. Henry lived under the care of the minister Sigfried; but at Belmont he had conceived a passion for the beautiful Matilda, the minister's daughter and only child. When the king died, Henry was taken to the capital to be installed as king, but he gave a *carte blanche,* literally speaking, to Sigfried bearing his signature; and before he left he had been speaking to Matilda, reiterating his love for her even in the circumstances. They had been meeting in secret, though old Sigfried had prohibited their meeting, for does not love laugh at bars? Henry had, at great

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expense, caused a secret passage to be built, the existence of which was known only to the two lovers. The will and testament of the dead king contained a conditional clause to the nomination of Prince Henry to the throne—that he must marry Diana, daughter of Constantia; this was communicated to the king-designate in the presence of a vast assembly, and Henry was simply bewildered.

He raged, and he visited Matilda again, to find that she had been forthwith married to Pedro, a nobleman, much against her will. This infuriated him all the more, and he wanted to tell Matilda how he had been the victim of circumstances. To get an opportunity to communicate with her he sent Pedro to prison, but Pedro escaped from there, to find Matilda spurning the new king, and the two fought a deadly fight. Pedro was mortally wounded, and then killed Matilda to put her out of the king's power, and the shock of the news killed Sigfried on the same day The king remained a recluse all his days and wore out his life in a fit of depression.

This tale of blood and horror—these deaths in the finale—is evidently a youngman's exercises in literary expression, translation from some story included in the Romance of History. It betrays no special note but simply records a turn for literature, and a training in the translation of writings in foreign languages.

*Hemamāḷā* is also a short story. The hero speaks in the first person. There was meeting in a Siva temple: an episode in Kanchi-Kaveri war. He was left for dead on the field. Next day he was better, he revived in a monk's hut, went back home, but the news of his death had preceded him, and he had to stay on till the

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fight had been won. Hemamāḷā had fallen a victim to some fell disease, partly due to mental worries at the idea of an actual bereavement; the hero on return was met by the monk who had been to the village years ago, and had then known both him and Hemamāḷā, and guessed her fatal disease. So the last scene again is a scene of deaths.

Both these stories are now interesting historically, showing not the growth of Madhusudan's taste, but the nature of his miscellaneous reading.

Madhusudan's literary output is not so large as that of Radhanath, but he was a metrist with sufficient skill. Experimenting with many fashions in versification, he produced a book of sonnets and wrote a number of elegies. He prepared verses suitable for children, in his days an important contribution to the new literature. Previously, juvenile literature made no sharp deviation from general fare, but, under western influence, and imbued with a sense of holiness of an ideal pursuit for the tender-hearted youth, he wrote a number of verses teaching devotion to God, love of country, etc. He was a serious poet, and would hardly relax into pure fun or amusement, except in the few satires aimed against literary pretenders, "bhaṇḍa-rasāyana", and the titles of many of his poems—*nishītha-chintā, jīvana-chintā*, etc.—speak for themselves. The sonnets, the elegies, the patriotic verses reveal a real interest in poetry, an interest which was responsible for so many attempts in different channels.

It will not do to omit all mention of his *Vasanta-gāthā* and *Kusumānjaḷi*, the first consisting of sonnets embodying the poet's judgment or eulogy of his con-

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temporaries or fellows in spirit, and also reflection on abstract topics like Truth, the World, the Past; the second containing the highest flights of his imagination; a spiritual outlook pervades everything.*

The great poet must have not only a supreme control over his words and images, but must have also a corresponding intensity of vision. Madhusudan had glimpses of this great poet's vision. His concise reproduction of Vedic life in ancient India is highly significant, and it was the object of unstinted praise by Rabindranath sometime about 1897. In reviewing the *Navyabhārat* for Agrahayan (1298 B.S.), Rabindranath (presumably it was he, because he used to do the reviewing for the *Sādhanā* even in the first year of its existence) said with regard to the *Rushichitra*, a poem by Madhusudan Rao

"The name suggests a Maharashtra origin; but such poetry has not been in Bengali language by any other non-Bengali hand. In the writings of the poet a dew-washed holy and new light of dawn of ancient India shines in a very pure, bright and great style. We have been gratified by a new poetic flavour in this poem. There is no real antique flavour in the writings of most Bengali writers on India, but in the *Rushichitra* the tune of an ancient and solemn *dhrupad* is to be heard playing."

His *Himāchaḷey udaya-utsaba* is a poem couched in rhymed verse in a like vein, with a mystic note in it. The marriage of earth and heaven is a brilliant piece of nature description.

* For a detailed study of the *Vasanta-gāthā*, the reader referred to Sj. Annada Shankar Ray's articles, *Utkaḷa-Sāhitya*, 1932.

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ki apūrva ki rahasyamaya parashare
bharuachhi sarvaprāṇa mahā harashare.

He anādi he ananta rasa-prasrabaṇa,
mora ādi anta rase rase nimagana.
āji mora netrotsava, shrīnetra tumbhara
nimagana mugdha drushṭi e mo nayanara.

What strange, mystic touch
Fills my entire being with a flood of joy!

Thou who art without beginning and end,
The spring of joy,
My beginning and my end are in joy immersed.
To-day my eyes feast, your holy gaze
Absorbs this charmed sight of mine.

More emphatic is the expression of the yearning for the infinite—from alone to alone.

"You are mine, O mine, mine and mine,
My God, my God, you are mine, O mine!"

The gradual illumination of snowy peaks, step by step, has been very ably done. The performance was appreciated by the *Bangadarshan,* and that shows how deep was the admiration it roused in cultural circles.

Madhusudan has been responsible for many patriotic verses, independent poems speaking from heart to heart. His *Utkaḷa-gāthā* is a collection of patriotic lyrics, and had been dedicated to Madhusudan Das. He is probably the first to write patriotic verses in Oriya. His patriotic outburst has in it a trace of historical nationalism; he traces the glory of Utkal to Dhauli, and exhorts his compatriots to a lofty endeavour after the example of the neighbouring provinces.



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His passionate love of India breaks out in the following lines

> ehi ki se puṇya bhūmi bhuvana-vidita
> subistīrṇa rangabhūmi āryya-gauravar ?
> ehi ki bhārata, yār mahimā sangīta—
> gambhīra-jhankāre purṇa diga-digantar ?
> ehi ki se sumanogga āshā-sarovar,
> yār juānāmruta pāne krutārtha dharaṇi ?
> yār teje bibhāshita desha-deshāntar ?
> ehi ki se vasudhār samujjvaḷa maṇi ?
> ehi ki amrutamayee mruttunjaya-
> santāna-jananī ?

> Is this the holy land, famed through the world,
> The spacious field for the play of Aryan glory ?
> Is this India, whose song of fame
> Fills all the quarters of heaven with solemn sound ?
> Is this the pond of hope, pleasing to the mind,
> Whose nectar of knowledge blesses the earth ?
> Whose vigour lights up all countries under
> the sun ?
> Is this the bright gem of the mother of all
> gems—the Earth ?
> Is this the mother of death-conquering sons—
> the mother full of nectar all through ?

It is apparent that he has had a vision of resplendent India, resplendent in glories spiritual and temporal, a vision that came to him through communion with the past.

He was an experimenter in verse forms. He sometimes stuck to old verse machinery—*sankarābharaṇa* and *rasakuḷyā vruttas*. His *Nishītha-chintā* is written in nine-line stanzas, the lines being rhymed as

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a b a b c d c d c. *Bhārata-bhāvanā*, another nine-line stanza poem, shows the rhymes placed in the order a b a b b c b c c though there is a breakdown of the metrical form after the first four stanzas. Sonnets by Sonepur and Suḍangi chiefs have been marked by seven couplets, each made up of 14 letters, distributed into two natural divisions of 8 and 6. But generally Madhusudan uses five rhymes, as in *Bichchhede* or *Hrudaya-sangīta*, rhymes being thus disposed a b a b a b a b c d e c d e. In his metrical experiments he was generally influenced by the west, and on this point he represents liberalism just as Phakirmohan stands for conservatism. It is remarkable also that in Madhusudan we find an attempt at constructing a sonnet-sequence in his three sonnets on Radhanath which, by the way, describe his personal relations with the great poet.

As regards the other works of Madhusudan, we find a liberal influence operating even in his *Sangīta-māḷā*, the preface to which shows his attitude to outside influences. He declared his readiness to accept such influences, and he actually composed some songs after the tunes current in Bengal and Surat. It was a collection of 104 songs; three of which were in Sanskrit metre and three in Surat metres; the rest were set to Bengali and Oriya *rāgiṇīs*. He said "As Bengali song-writers composed to tunes adapted from other languages, I trust no objection will be raised if songs are composed in Oriya to tunes, etc., imported from other languages."

But his affiliation to Sanskrit should not be minimised. His *Uttara-rāma-charita* is a faithful translation of Sanskrit measures; the *nāndī* is in the familiar *navākshar vrutta* of Oriya verse. But it is

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proper to note that there also he took liberties in arranging the text, *e.g.*, he used the *Vishkambhak* once at least as an independent scene, and in Act IV we get a second scene whereas in Sanskrit there are no such subdivisions.

Madhusudan Rao was closely connected with the *Utkaḷa Sāhitya* since 1897 He not only contributed articles and poems, but also trained men and taught novices in literature to pass through their apprenticeship. He was closely connected also with the Utkal Sahitya Samaj when it was established out of the Alochanā Sabha of Cuttack which had been functioning for about 9 years. He was the first president of the Sahitya Samaj. He gave patterns of virile and intellectual prose in Oriya, and his lyric outbursts lent a new grace to the literature. He utilised his time fully in the writing of poems, and writing to him was an effective anodyne. He would challenge physical pain to detract him from his writing. We see him as one of those simple and strong souls whose eyes are turned to God and nature, and who sing and write because they want to serve Humanity. Oriya literature gained from him both in range and content, and the gift was spontaneous. He succeeded in winning the praise of the judicious—Bankimchandra and Rabindranath both praised him for his poetry; and who will refuse him the recognition which his poetry and prose give him? He was one of the makers of modern Oriya literature, and his manifold activity in literary fields has left a lasting stamp on the age. We can credit him with robust optimism, with a conviction, a faith, that this creation is full of *amṛta,* that beyond the dreary deserts of unfulfilled desire there streches the happy country which

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can satisfy our thirst. Naturally he thinks with Tennyson—

'Tis better to have loved and lost
Than never to have loved at all.

He had ears attuned to the music of the new era, when in Orissa as elsewhere the Kingdom of God would be a reality, when from million of voices would come in full-throated song—

Lord of the Universe is One,
The human race is one.

Radhanath's name and achievement are no doubt greater, but Madhusudan's contribution to modern Oriya poetry, both in form and spirit, has been substantial.

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## CHAPTER V

# PHAKIRMOHAN SENAPATI THE NEW ERA IN PROSE

Phakirmohan—his life and career—his translations and poems—his novels—*Lachhmā* and *Bibāsinī*—his autobiography—conclusion.

One of the achievements of modern literature is in most cases the remarkable growth of prose. Prose in English literature before the age of Elizabeth was not accepted as common currency, in spite of the many specimens made available by the industry of scholars; and though Bacon wrote with energy and Milton chanted in solemn and long-drawn, majestically rolling sentences, it was the eighteenth century in English literature that witnessed the vigorous and widely distributed growth of prose in English language. Bengali prose before the nineteenth century is more or less a literary curiosity In Oriya, the prose was developed later still; and the twentieth century, when Oriya prose has learnt to march in big strides so much so that it tends to oust verse from the domain so long associated with it, has been preluded in the later nineteenth and the earlier years of the present century by a distinguished band of Oriya prose writers in whom sincere patriotism joined with real creative urge to the making of enduring literary efforts, and the result was a good harvest.

A prominent member of this distinguished group was Phakirmohan Senapati (1843-1918). Born in 1843, he lost his father when still an infant; his father was then on his way back home near Bhubaneswar, and

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he died on the steps of the Bindu Sarovar. The widowed mother took to bed at once, and, after languishing there for fourteen months, died. Phakirmohan's original name was Brajamohan; but he was so ill in the days of his childhood, ailing with jaundice and piles and other diseases, that his grandmother (father's mother) who nursed him vowed she would bring up the child a *fakir* or holy mendicant if he would recover. The boy did recover, and the grandmother kept her vow by dressing him out exactly like a *fakir* for days once a year when the boy, mendicant-like, would beg for rice the whole day and sell his collection in the evening, the proceeds to be spent on *shirni* to be given to the *Pirs*. This explains why he was called and known as Phakirmohan.

He received his earliest schooling when there were few printed books in Oriya, and the Cuttack Mission Press was the only printing house in Orissa. When eighteen years old, he had to give up his studies because he could not pay the fees which amounted to annas four! But then he was appointed teacher of that very school on a monthly salary of Rupees two and annas eight only! It was increased to four rupees at the third month. But living was cheap, rice selling at one maund and a half per rupee, oil seven seers and ghee three seers per rupee the rates are given by Phakirmohan himself in his autobiography. He kept on for some time the life of a schoolmaster, and taught himself English. The self-educating process went on, and it was a key to the character of the man. Even when he gave up teaching at school, he did not cease to educate himself; as a matter of fact, that went on as a life-long process.

In 1871, he was offered the Dewan's job at Nilgiri

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State, and occupied similar administrative posts in different states, Dompara, Dhenkanal, Daspalla, Pallahaḍā, Keonjhar; thus picking up knowledge of men and manners which was to be of use to him later in his literary life.

In 1877, he went to Dhenkanal on a monthly salary of Rs. 100/- as Asstt. Manager of the State and, while there, he lost his son who had been born in the place, a loss keenly felt by both the parents. Specially for the consolation of his girl-wife he arranged for daily readings, by a Brahmin, from Balaram Dasa's *Rāmāyaṇa.* But as it made little or no impression on her, he began himself to translate from Valmiki's Sanskrit original and read out to her the work w[illegible] done by day and read out to the bereaved mother at evening. It succeeded in its immediate objective; it was easily understood by her. The first part of the work (ādikāṇḍa) was dedicated to John Beames. The 26th sarga of the original corresponded to the 29th of his version; this shows that his creative mind was at work even in the translation. The measure was 14 words per line, corresponding to the *Payār,* the favourite metre of Bengali, used in the *Rāmāyaṇ* of Kṛttivas and the *Mahābhārat* of Kashiram. It has been as old in Oriya as Sarala Dasa whose *Dāṇḍivrutta,* written in the fifteenth century, however, was more flexible.

The first book Phakirmohan composed was *Rājputrar Itihās,* 'the story of the prince'; but it could not be printed as the expenses would come up to Rs. 400/-, a sum then altogether beyond his reach. In 1866, he published his *Jīvanacharita,* a translation of the Bengali book written by Iswarchandra Vidyasagar. For a few years he was busy over the preparation of school

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books on history and mathematics. His years were at one time full of translation work, and he completed his verse translation of the *Rāmāyaṇa* by 1895 and of the *Mahābhārata* by 1905. He worked hard at his self-chosen task, working at it regularly for 3 or 4 hours per day Once he attempted the *Srīmadbhāgabad Gītā* in 1887 It is remarkable that such works he should continue to perform for years till almost the last day of his life, his version of the *Chhāndogya* Upanishad appearing in 1916. His *Khila Harivaṃsa* was an attempt at translating literally from the original. He could enter very easily into the traditional spirit, and the simple diction and measure of Old Oriya verse were thoroughly assimilated by him in his translation work. There may have been the additional motive to make it easily understandable to his girl-wife for whom it had been designed in the first instance. In finishing the *Harivansha Parva* he gave his *bhaṇitā* in the right traditional style in the concluding lines, just as he concluded his first sarga in the *Rāmāyaṇa*

> Amrutasamāna aṭe Srirāma charita,
> Phakiramohana bole paḍhi tosha chitta.

The story of Sri Ram is like nectar Phakirmohan narrates it. Hear, and be glad.

He used the *Navākkhari Vrutta,* the nine-letter measure of *Bhāgavata*, in translation of the *Harivansha*, and at the end of the *bāla-kāṇḍa*

> Rāmāyaṇa puṇyakatha amrutasamāna,
> Phakīramohana bole paḍhi hua dhanya.

The holy narrative of the *Rāmāyaṇa* is like nectar Phakirmohan tells the story. Read it, and be blessed.

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But at the end of the book he does not refer to himself at all; after the usual or customary phala-shruti, he glorifies the house of Shyamananda De of Balasore but for whose help the work would not have seen the light. This perhaps shows the modern trend in breaking away from the traditional method, acknowledgment of help received from others, rather than any autobiographical account.

He was a versifier of no inconsiderable merit. His *Utkaḷabhramaṇa* (1892) is a topographical poem for which he was eminently qualified because he had travelled a lot and knew a good deal about the land of his birth. He had been working in so many feudatory states, and had learned at first hand so much of the country. Two years later appeared his *Pushpamāḷā* or garland of flowers, and the very next year his *Upahāra* or 'offering' (1895). Translations, elegie. hymns, thoughts easy of comprehension and gracefully rendered, constitute the thirty-five poems which make the book, the last being named *Upahāra*, as the slender book of verses was meant to be an offering to the memory of his departed wife, Krushṇa Kumārī.

The dawn of the present, the twentieth, century exacted from him a new kind of work. It began with the *Chhamān āṭ guṇṭh*, a novel which was serially published under the pseudonym of Dhurjatī. Published in book form in 1901, it ran to a second edition in 1916, and consisted of 27 chapters presenting a satirical picture of a village Zemindar, Rāmchandra Mangarāj, a self-made man. Champā and Bimalā (in Bankimchandra's novel *Durgeshanandinī*) at once occur to the mind and invite a comparison. In many respects, this first novel of his is a work of outstanding merit. It exposes the village exploiter, the type of landed pro-

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prietor who knows how to utilise and who does utilise, the laws of the land for his own benefit, and who goes on making his pile by coercing poor and helpless villagers to part with their few acres. *Chhamān āṭ gunṭh*, six *māns* and eight *gunṭhs*, this was exactly the measuure of land belonging to a poor soul named Baghia and his wife Sāria, and Ramchandra squeezed the land out of them so that Baghia turned mad and Sāria died. Eventually the sinner was brought to trial and there was no escape for his accomplices either—"the wages of sin is death" physical as well as moral. The author is quite at home in describing village settings, in analysing motives to crime, and his language is fresh, simple, vigorous, freely larded with words of indigenous and Persian origin to be found in common use. It is a prose style which at once stamps him as a pioneer and a creator. The chapters are named as well as numbered. The death of the Sāāntānī, the landed proprietor's wife, has been described very powerfully, and we find that with the English novelist Dickens, Phakirmohan describes trial scenes and police investigations with great gusto.

There was a brief spell of poetic activity during 1908-9 when he wrote his *Abasara-bāsare* or in the leisured days ('Hours in Idleness?') and *Baudhāvatāra kāvya*. This latter kavya ran through its 2nd edition in 1916. Before this he had written a poem named *Maharshi Gautamacharita;* but the manuscript had been lying at home long neglected, till it was at last recovered with other books and papers; but alas! it was then too much moth-eaten to be of any use. The book was then undertaken on an impulse, begun and finished—all in six weeks.

Phakirmohan was conscious of the hybrid nature

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of the undertaking, a poem and at the same time a biography. The book was based on the great biography of the Buddha, *Lalitavistara*, some Bengali books, and also manuscripts. The Bengali reader will at once remember Nabinchandra's *Amitābha* as well as Satyendranath Tagore's *Bauddha Dharma*. Phakirmohan saw in Buddhism the way to salvation out of the tyrannical rule of the Brahmans, and to him the Buddha appeared to be the saviour of the world. The poem is complete in 19 cantos with an epilogue.

Fifteen years after *Chhamān āṭ Gunṭh*, Phakirmohan's second novel appeared, *Māmu*. How did he fill this interval? He must have written a lot, but the published writings cannot fully account for it. We do not know if the indifference of his contemporaries to his unquestioned merit is partly to blame and also to account for this silence. There were, it was given out, a number of other novels in manuscript written by the great novelist; they were not published. This one was a domestic novel; the nephew Narahari was the hero of the piece, but we feel the presence of his mother as well, Chāndamaṇi. The nurse, the *peskār*, are characters against whom are set the Nazir, the maidservant, Chitrā, and his brother-in-law, Raghava.

What strikes one is the neatness of his descriptions and the clearness of his style. Regarding characters, Ramchandra Mangaraj and Natabar Das the uncle are paired off. Greed leads both to ruin. So do Champā and Chitrā go together.

His third work on the line, the *Lachhmā*, is not domestic novel, but a historical one. It claims to be based on historical facts. It gives us a picture of the decadent central power, the disunited feudal chiefs, the marauder from Mahārashṭra, and the bold warriors

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of the khaṇḍāyat caste who are divided in their allegiance and practically converted into robbers. Lachhmā, an upcountry girl on pilgrimage to Puri, was accompanied by her parents and husband, fell a victim to a party of Marhatta raiders and the parents were killed in the fight. The husband and the wife both survived, but neither knew the whereabouts of the other. The helpless girl took refuge in the Rāibaṇiā Gaṛh in the neighbourhood, where she was taken up by the wife of the chief as her daughter, but this *gaṛh* too was attacked by the Bargīs, and the chief killed in action, his wife cremating herself on the funeral pyre. Poor Lachhmā, disguised as a *pānwāli* or seller of betels, mixed in the Bargī camp on the lookout for revenge. Her husband meanwhile had managed to be on the good books of Nawab Alivardi Khan, whom he had rescued in a desperate crisis. Both Lachhma and her husband had vowed to kill Bhāskar Pandit out of revenge for the loss of their parents. They kept their vow, and were successful in their attempt, but they could not penetrate through each other's disguise and consequently there was no recognition on any side. Unknown to each other they went to Gaya for the *tarpaṇ* of their parents; and only when recounting the names of their ancestors could they recognise each other through the voice, and this was a wonderful union—*apūrba milan*, a name by which the book had been introduced when it came out as a serial in the *Utkaḷa Sāhitya*, as has been given out above, under the pseudonym of 'Dhurjati'

As a historical novel, *Lachhmā* had been preceded by Rāma Sankar Ray's *Bibāsinī* which had been serially published in the *Utkaḷa-prabhā* of Mayurbhanj, received a reward or honorarium of Rupees one hundred only, and then published in book form. In 41 chapters

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of varying lengths, it is a story of the times when the subedar was a Marhatta chief The manner of presenting dialogue, characters and comments is different from Phakirmohan's, and more closely approaches the Bengali type as appeared in Bankimchandra's novels. No wonder because it was a contemporary work.

His *Prāyaschitta* (1915) in 55 brief chapters—so brief that sometime one short passage constitutes a chapter—describes the feud between two rival families. Govindachandra is the young hopeful, the unspoilt and only son of 'Sāmanta Vaishṇavacharaṇ Paṭṭanāyaka Vidyadhara Mahapatra' who was persuaded to keep his son at Cuttack, under the supervision, not of the family attendant who accompanied him as a matter of course, but of Sadananda, the son of a childhood friend of his wife's, a childhood friend who had been kindly taken by her under protection, given a good employment in her husband's estate, and who had then betrayed his trust and died. Govindachandra stays at Cuttack for 'education' 'higher education' the name which sometimes conceals a multitude of sins. Indumatī is the only daughter of the rival family, of widowed Sāmanta Sankarshan Mahānti. She is reputed to be endowed with poetic faculty. This rouses Govindachandra's interest in her, an interest which soon ripens to love. Sadānanda, intriguing with Rājīblochan, so managed things that a marriage ceremony was got through between Indumatī and Kumār Govindachandra, without Vaishṇavacharaṇ being in the know Then followed an incident, which seems like *deus ex machina* to bring about a tragic episode in the quickest interval possible, of Govindachandra being assaulted as he was about to pay a visit to him father-in-law's house in a romantic mood, assaulted dangerously by the servants of his

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father-in-law's household. Only the alertness prompted by the love which his attendant bore him saved his life. But was it a mistake after all, or conspiracy, a trick contrived by mischief-makers? Both the families were ruined, but, through all the plot shines the tender loyalty of the young barber boy for Gobindachandra.

The author has described in this novel the homely joys, and destinies—not obscure—of substantial Oriya householders. Phakirmohan shows a fine power for description, a blend of humour and observation, which enlivens the story in spite of evident imperfections in the plot. The brief paragraphs which constitute the chapters are all made up of equally brief sentences with a beauty and rhythm of their own. If we compare his first novel with this last, we find that the brevity of the chapters has gained appreciably, and the opinion may be hazarded that it was the result of conscious effort, so as to get something of a new effect. The descriptions of nature are enjoyable; and the wise sayings which are interspersed add to the charm. Phakirmohan's language has a charm, a crisp picturesqueness which the reader finds exhilarating. If novels are to be estimated for their instructiveness at least as much as for their entertainment value, then Phakirmohan's *Prāyaschitta* should not suffer in the least in critical regard. We cannot forget in this connection that it had not the benefit of the author's revision—Pandit Kulamaṇi Kāvyatirtha went through it and made necessary changes, but probably it remains as it was first drafted.

The *Ātmajīvanacharita* or Phakirmohan's autobiography ought to be more widely appreciated than it is now. Written in 1917, published in the form of a book in 1927, it is not only a reliable storehouse of

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information, but also in itself an attractive form of literature, unique in its kind in Orissa and not lacking intrinsic merit at that. Its style is simple, direct, and it admirably suits the narration. It is a book which richly deserves to be translated into other modern Indian languages of India, because it describes conditions at a highly interesting period of transition, when western influence was casting its spell upon the Indian web of life—the action of the influence being more or less similar in the different provinces of India; and also because it is the life-history of a man of chequered career, which by itself constitutes a major attraction.

He died in the morning of Friday, June 14, 1918, at the ripe old age of 76. His diction drew its strength from the indigenous soil, and succeeded in reproducing real Orissa—he did not translate his experiences into a literary language. His piety, patriotism and energy have materially shaped the literature that he created. His special attention was diverted towards fiction—and it is quite possible that the great success attained by Bengali men of letters in that particular domain in his time may have prompted him to a similar endeavour. The brief comment on his style made by an Oriya writer excellently sums up its characteristic loka-sādhārananka bhāshāre kavi upanyāsa lekhiyachhanti, athacha ruchir abhāva nāhim, garimā achhi athacha grāmyatā nāhim. "The poet has written his novels in the language of the people, but it is not wanting in taste; it has dignity, but no vulgarity."

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## CHAPTER VI

# DRAMATIC LITERATURE

Early Oriya dramatic practices—Vaishnava Pani—Ramshankar Ray—Jagamohan Lala—Bhikaricharan—Kamapal—Aswini Ghosh—Godavaris Misra.

Radhanath, Madhusudan, Phakirmohan, the three pioneers of Modern Oriya literature, had opened up new forms of literature, the lyric, the epic, the novel, but one important form was still left unexplored by them, and that was drama. There was no dramatic literature in ancient Oriya in the modern sense. Even though Orissa was guided very strongly by Sanskrit traditions, there was not even an attempt at translating Sanskrit dramas that we know of. As in many other countries the tentative efforts towards dramatic performances were associated in Oriya with religion; the *Rāmāyaṇa*, the *Mahābhārata*, the story of Krishna—these have furnished topics for Līlā of which both the time of composition and the composer were unknown. Only in the *Rāmalīlās* of certain districts do we come across the name of an author called Sadashiva. It is not difficult to speculate that this *Rāmalīlā* was a gift of the north, where Rama has always been a favoured deity. Shri Devendra Satyarthi, the well-known worker in the field of folk-songs in India, has picked up songs connected with Rama, but the number of such songs is small. *Sūang* is something different from Līlā, conceived not with any educational purpose, but purely with the idea of amusement. It has more of the humorous side and little or nothing of the religious. The Līlā or religious element and the Suang or Pantomime element, synthetised into the Yātrā form, but



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there the dance of the Suang was more popular. In the petty politics of the village, the Suang has a special importance and exerts a practical "influence", because its hits seldom miss their effect. There is another sort of dramatic representation, *Goṭipua nāṭa*, got up by a *solo* artist, a boy dressed as a girl, who begins to dance, singing some *chaupadī* or other of the Bhanja school of poets. In practice the number of the artists sometimes increases to two and the performance ceases to be confined to the usual solo performance. The *Kelā-keluni-nāṭa* (the Kelā is a caste employed in tending animals, snakes, etc.; the Sāpa-Kelās of Patya thana still speak a mixed dialect of Oriya and Bengali), *Dhobā-Dhobāni-nāṭa, Keuṭa-Keuṭani-nāṭa,* etc., were comic pieces enacted by a pair of workers, sometimes a married couple, such as the washer-woman and her hubby, and they furnish a separate variety in the field of the dramatic literature of the old school. Some of the *suāngs* have been printed and are available. A few of them may be mentioned here as well. Vaishnava Paṇi is an author of some such *suāngs*. His *Daksha-Yajna Suāng* was written in songs and rhymed conversations. There is another *suāng* in which we are treated to an account of the quarrel between Durga and Ganga. It is continuous and not divided into acts and scenes, and Shiva ends his song with the words "Bipra-Vaishnava bhāsā Gīte,"—Vaishnava the Brahmin in his vernacular song. His *Harishchandra suāng* (now called a *Gīti-Nāṭya*) begins with the entrance of Naṭa and Naṭī, actor and actress, singing together. In a later work, *Vidyā-Sundar Gītābhinaya,* Paṇi begins by making the Naṭa and the Naṭi talk, but this talk is no longer in mere rhymed verse, but in prose sentences. The *suāngs* are then not independent

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of Sanskrit tradition, but they effectively reflected that tradition which is at the same time in exact accordance with their community

Things were pretty well like this in the early years of the nineteenth century, and they had not changed even by the eighties. The art was enviable, but difficult to copy. It was the sight of a Bengali play on the stage of Cuttack that first turned the attention of Ramshankar Ray to the new literary medium that it revealed. He turned at once to the medium and all through his life the composition of dramatic literature absorbed much of his time; thus he wrote *Kānchikāverī* (1880), *Banabālā* (1882), *Kalikāḷa* (1883), *Rām Banabās* (1891), *Buḍhābara* (1892), *Kamsavadh* (1896), *Vishamodaka* (1900), *Yugadharma* (1902), *Kānchanamāḷi* (1904), *Chaitanya-līlā* (1906); *Līlāvatī* was composed and staged in 1912, *Buḍhāloka* in 1917. Ramshankar and Girishchandra, the Oriya and Bengali dramatists, were thus contemporaries, and their works as such would reveal interesting points of comparison. Ramshankar has left writings in other varieties also; he had translated into Oriya from the *Ṛgveda Sanhitā* and the *Yajurveda Sanhitā*, as well as *Ishopanishat*, *Kenopanishat* and *Bhagavad-gītā*. All these bespeak a diligent pen and an earnest solicitude for literary work. It also shows the great sympathy he felt for the Sanskrit tradition. Specially regarding the new dramatic literature, he may claim to be its pioneer, and it cannot be accounted a small thing to hold that from 1880 to 1917, for the space of 37 years, he continued to devote himself to the study and cultivation of Oriya dramatic literature. Ramshankar also tried his hand very early at pure poetry, and his *Prem-tarī* (1878), a *gāthā* or ballad, has been written in the vein of Rabindranath Tagore some of

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whose poems had then been published; the story was based on the topic of Goldsmith's *Hermit*. It was first published in the pages of the *Utkaḷa-Madhupa,* and reprinted in book form. It consists of five cantos. The plot of some of the later dramas may be given here to convey an idea of the intent and purpose of the contemporary dramatist.

The *Yugadharma* (1902) is a social drama. There is an honest man whose daughter Rani is a child-widow; she is the object of a landlord's vulgar design, but two good-natured, pious-minded youngmen come to her rescue; she is then brought up and educated in Calcutta, and later on she is married according to Brahmo rites. It will be thus seen that the plot is simple, as conceived by Roy, and that his tendency was to paint life as he had seen it. His *Buḍhābara* is a farce, with a *prastābanā* in which the sutradhara goes away after singing a moral and prophetic song. In his plays, for *act* we have *abhinaya* and for *scene, drushya.* His *Kalikāḷa,* composed in the space of four days on the occasion of a picnic at Nandikeshwar on the bed of the Mahanadi, was written on the eve of Christmas closing, December, 1882. It was staged twice in March, 1883. It was not a farce proper, as the last scene is pathetic, and Radhanath called it a "serio-comic farce" It was praised in the papers—*Dīpikā,* the *Samskārak* and the *Oriyā-o-Navasambād,* the last taking the opportunity to comment on "the practical absence of dramas, novels, farces in Oriya" *"Utakaḷa Sāhitya bhāṇḍarare nāṭaka, upanyāsa, prahasana nāhin boile hue."* *Visvajajna,* a *gītināṭya* in 4 acts, is of ethical interest, and sets forth that the caste-system enjoined by the Vedas was more elastic than at present and was so enjoined for the proper performance of one's duty. The prologue con-

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sists of a song sung by the unseen maidens of fate to the accompaniment of dance; this is a new feature and may have been prompted by the Bengali dramatist Kshirode Prasad Vidyavinode's works, where they abound. It may be remembered in this connection that Ramshankar had made *adruṣṭa-kumārīs*, who sing and dance, a regular feature in his plays. The device then may be due to his readings in other literatures.

*Kānchanamāḷi* is a five-act play, dealing with a social problem, inter-caste marriage—the marriage of a *nuliā* girl Kanchana with Suryyamani, a *Karaṇ.* Obvious anachronisms there are many. A remarkable feature is that all acts end with a song from the *adruṣṭa Kumāris.* The effect of Sri Chaitanya's preaching on the social system is the topic of the play

*Chaitanyalīḷā,* also a five-act play, moves on blank verse *Abhinaya* and *drushya* are used for acts and scenes. Instead of *naṭas, adruṣṭakumārīs* begin the play by singing the *prastābanā* and also end the drama with a song.

The next dramatist of note was Jagamohan Lala who wrote *Satīnāṭak;* he had previously written *Bhrama-Bhanjana,* and *Bābājī,* which was practically not a play at all but a sketch with a purpose, it was in the words of Blumhardt, "a Drama directed against the use of Intoxicating Drugs," and published from Cuttack in 1877. But *Satīnāṭak,* a story of Garjati oppression, was one of the best Oriya plays. Lala Saheb was an expert in drawing male characters, as in the sketches of Bāhābalendra and Pani Malik. There was a predecessor even to Jaganmohan, *viz.,* Kavichandra Raghunatha Pariksha, who in 1868 from Cuttack published a drama, *Gopīnātha Vallabha Nāṭak,* probably a translation from a Vaishnav play in

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Sanskrit; we may notice in this connection a minor dramatist, a farce-writer named Gauriballabh Pattanayak who wrote *Mahājana-nāṭa* or the Village Tradesman, published in 1889 (Cuttack).

Madhushudan Das in an article on Oriya literature and its history mentions Bhikaricharan Pattanayak,—the author of Oriya plays *Lankādahan* (1311 B.S.), *Kaṭakvijay*, and others. Bhikaricharan in his *nāndī* to *Kaṭakvijay* follows the eastern traditions, but ?attempts blank verse in the deliberations of the Governor-General's Council described in the opening scenes. 'Abhinay' and 'Drushya' are his words for acts and scenes, just as we have found them with Ramshankar Ray. In scene *ii* the soldier soliloquising reminds the Bengali reader of a similar one in *Palāshīr Yuddha*—'Oh dear Carolina mine'!

Madhusudan does not approve of the blank verse of Bhikari in his *Kaṭakavijay* (the full title is *Engrāj-kartik Kaṭakvijaya Nāṭaka* which was dedicated to the Mayurbhanja Chief), and he is quite justified. If we compare the blank verse of Balaji, the Marhatta governor of Barbati Fort, with that of the Dūta or the messenger, we shall be at once convinced of the charge. Bhikaricharan's blank verse may have a certain dignity of its own, but it does not know to unbend itself, it is not flexible. The curious amalgam is visible in the *nāndī* according to eastern tradition and the tragic ending which follows the West. As regards the matter, it is evident that the dramatist has been rather hard put to it in reconciling his patriotism with his approbation for the English beneficence in ruling India. Bhikaricharan was a lawyer, and his book-making activities extended to the publication of Selections from Civil Procedure Code in an Oriya form. His *Ratnamāḷī* and

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*Sushīlā* in 1917 also deserve mention. He was, in fact, the second dramatist of Orissa in the real sense of the term.

In this early stage of activities in dramatic composition, Parlakimedi displayed remarkable interest. The prince, Padmanabha Narayan Deva, born on 15th December, 1872, and deceased on 4th February, 1904, was nicknamed the Chandra Raj, or the Moon King, for his beauty He was trained in English, Bengali, Hindi, Oriya and Telugu, in the first four of which he became proficient. The distinguished Oriya scholar, Shyamsundar Rajguru, was his tutor, and helped him to composed dramas. The prince set up a stage in the capital, and wrote, first of all *Pralhāda* or *Sangīta Prahlāda Nāṭak* which was eventually published in 1901. A few of the songs only were composed by Rajguru while Shri Venkaṭa Shastri helped him with valuable advice and suggestions as to the principles of dramatic composition. One song of Aparṇā Pāṇḍā, a well-read scholar in Oriya literature, was also included. *Ahalyā-Shāp-O-Mochan* was composed and published in 1902. His *Vāṇa-darpa-Dalan Nāṭak* was on the subject of Usha Swayambar. He also wrote another drama, *Tārak-Sanghār,* but though staged by the local theatre, it has not yet been published. Another play is to his credit, named *Dāna-Parīkshā,* where Karna's truthfulness and beneficence are tested. We may also mention here *Prem-taranga* (1910) by Shri Radhamohan Rajendra Deva of the royal house of Chitkiti. It is practically a closet drama, relating the story of *Kādamvarī,* in 7 acts and in right classical style, after the tradition of Sanskrit dramas. There are the *nāndī*, the *Sutradhār,* the *naṭī,* all introducing the play, and each act is concluded

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by a verse in Oriya in a particular Sanskritic metre, *Shārdūla-vikrīḍita, Sragdhara,* etc., as the case may be, but generally well done. The author was a poet, a singer, a musician, an expert in stagecraft.

Of the rest, Govinda Ratha was a prolific writer; but he failed to secure a hold on the mind of the younger generation. Kamapal Mishra (1875-1927) had been a thoughtful writer and fond of music in his boyhood. He had the gift of singing and composed many songs which are practically lost today. Sanskrit and Oriya literature were the favourite studies of Kamapal. His *Sītāvivāha* (1899) made some noise when it was first published; the writer was then a student of Ravenshaw College, Cuttack. In spite of defects it was a new venture in the line of mythological dramas, and critics who ran it down could not but admit the newness of the conception which prompted it. He graduated in arts and law from Cuttack, had published the *Apūrba-svapna* in book form while still a student, served for some time in the superior service of the Mayurbhanj State, then practised at the Cuttack bar for a year or two, when he fell ill, suffered and dragged on till the end. *Sītāvivāha* was followed by three other dramas, *Vasantalatikā, Harishchandra* and *Durgā-Shavarī,* and Kamapal was engaged in writing a novel as well, named *Prabhāmayee.* But physical infirmities set in, and the last of the plays and the novel could not be completed. So his only published play for a long time was the *Sītavivāha.* It begins with a regular classical *nāndī* or prologue in which tradition is maintained, and the acts are divided into the *Drushyas,* by a song descriptive of the spring season. Blank verse is occasionally employed. It is remarkable that in the preface (written by Abhiram Bhanja) a preference is

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expressed for historical themes, rather than Pauranic topics, as the former would appeal more on account of their connection with Orissa, etc. In other words, there is to be a closer attention to history, to 'reality', to patriotism.

There is a big gap after Kamapal, and we come next upon Aswinikumar Ghose and Godavaris Mishra, trying their hands at historical drama. One drama composed by Aswinikumar Ghosh (and printed in 1927) may be described here—*Konārka*. It is a three-act play, with a song for the *prastābanā* or prologue. Each act consists of scenes called *drushyas*. Dharmā, the inspired son of Bishu Mahārāṇā, the leading sculptor employed to build up Konarak, is the hero, the victim of class pride and prejudice. The national feeling is developed over the tragedy of the temple which cracked as soon as built, and which the sea at the same time deprived of the image by a sudden onrush. The language is prose and blank-verse mixed up together, the lines in blank verse varying to suit the emotion.

*Purushottama Deva* by Pandit Godavaris Mishra, published in book form in 1917, is a full-fledged five-act play, and without any prologue, etc. It was the author's first play, and it earned him praise from Phakirmohan Senapati to the effect that it presented historical facts through creative imagination; it was prompted by the kind encouragement of the chiefs of Parlakimedi and Chikiti. The language is mainly prose, with songs scattered throughout the play. The *motif* of patriotism is sustained, and the end, though traditional enough to bid everybody a happy good-bye, breathes the patriotic sentiment. The conflict is also there, in the mind of the king, divided



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in two by his love for Padmavati and his determination to honour his word. Whatever other merits the book may lay claim to, it must be admitted that the soliloquies of the king are too long, and there is a flagging of interest in consequence. The great thing about it is the transformation of the old form into the new in spite of the fact that the material is old, the story of Padmavati, princess of Kanchi, being won by the great king of Orissa, Purushottama Deva.

How strong the traditional hold still is, will be amply proved in *Indirā-Pariṇay* by Chandrashekhar Pani, published in 1911, priced at annas six, dedicated to her Highness the Rani Saheba of Dhenkanal. Her religious bent, specially a taste for *Nṛsinha-purāṇ*, had emboldened him to put, in a dramatised version, the marriage of Lakshmi and Narayan, on Rukmini-Parinay-Ekadashi day The dedication is in blank verse, and the play is mythological. Noteworthy also is the *Mangalācharaṇ* or prelude, consisting of music to a song sung by the wave girls (first act, first scene). Lakshmi enters the garden attended by her usual retinue of eight companions.

The book seems to contain echoes from Michael Madhusudan :—

> kisa se bhāvanā Indu ! Indunibhānane !
> heuchhi adhira, mātra na jāne ki pāin ?
> kāminī vedanā, sakhā ! jānai kāminī,
> na jāne apare.

Indira's father had vowed he would bestow her on whoever would hit the mark. But she had meanwhile fallen in love with a portrait of Nrisinha,; this is, as no doubt the entire play in general amounts to, roman-

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tic idealisation of the Pauranic account. Neerabati, consort of Barun, has been concerned at the changed outlook of the princess whose heart is revealed in her questions regarding the love of birds and beasts while taking a stroll in the garden. Nrisinha, son of Krishnaballabh, was the chosen one, and he hit his mark all right; thus he stands the test very well and deserves the win. The fifth Act is very slender in extent. The scene is in Badarikāshram. It is full of songs, verses, speeches, etc., in traditional style.

These dramas showing the use of (1) an artificially constructed stage with a complex machinery of (2) wings and (3) scenes, were taken from the west through Bengali. It was the direct knowledge of the Bengali stage that prompted the Oriya enterprise, though later on it may have fallen on its indigenous props. The dramatic works of Aswinikumar and Godavaris owe a good deal to the works of Dwijendralal Ray. The modern stage in Orissa still carries on the tradition left by Ramshankar Ray, and in so far as it is progressive it follows in the track of Bengali literature. Thus, there are one-act dramas now, *e.g.*, *Upekshitā*, by Baikuntha Pattanayak (*Utkaḷa Sāhitya*, 1931), the story of Chhaya and Devadatta which reminds one strongly of Tagore's Bengali playlet *Vidāy-Abhishāp*.

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# CHAPTER VII

# CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE

The three poets—Nandakishore, Gangadhar, Chintamani—"Utkaḷa-Bharati" Kuntaḷākumārī—Baikunthanath and Narayanmohan—Advance in prose—Gopalchandra and Shashibhushan—Criticism and philosophy—Progressive writers—Cultural conflict—the contribution of the University.

Oriya literature during 1870-1918, for close upon half a century, has flourished in modern times; there is no need to belittle it. This fact has not, unfortunately, been admitted in government books of information of the usual kind. It is a matter for surprise that even in District Gazetteers published by O. S. O'Malley, a distinguished and intelligent member of the Civil Service, one whose analysis even of things literary is not very often liable to dispute, the following remark is found to occur

"During the British period Oriya poetry has shown no progress. It is represented by a few doggerel compositions and some small pieces of verse, among which a collection of short poems by Rai Bahadur Radhanath Rai deserves notice."

Radhanath, Phakirmohan, Madhusudan, Gaurishankar, Ramshankar—all in their respective spheres did materially contribute to the making of modern Oriya, and when there comes to be written, in the distant future, a survey of Oriya literature from the very beginnings down to the present day, it may be expected that the modern times will not be slurred over by impatient or ignorant criticism, and that those whom we now label as modern writers will have nothing to lose in the perspective of time. As a matter of fact, in

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our present survey we have not yet recounted the contribution of other Oriya writers—our contemporaries—which we now propose to do.

After the great trio, Radhanath, Madhusudan and Phakirmohan, the names of three other poets who were their immediate successors may be mentioned Nandakishore Bal, Gangādhar Meher and Chintāmaṇi Mahānti. Nandakishore was a University graduate, and he worshipped nature and the Paurāṇic Muse by turns. *Krushṇakumārī* is one of his longer poems, running up to five cantos, dwelling on the Rajput princess of the name who took poison to save herself and her country from dishonour in a great national and individual crisis; as regards the theme (not the roll of the verses) it is clearly modelled on the Bengali drama of the same title written by Michael Madhusudan Datta. An example will show Hemchandra's influence also

āchhi sehi desha anāre nayana
  sehi ārāvallī ṭekichhi māthā,
digavyāpi maru kalpanā karṇare
  kahuchhi atīta gaurava kathā!
āchhi se sankaṭa yahun mlechha ṭhāṭe
  karile pratāpa maraṇa vrushṭi
nāhin se mahatwa yā vārtā shravaṇe
  ḍeruthilā karṇa nikhila srushṭi!

Look forth, my eyes, the country still exists—
The Aravalli is rearing its head,
Deserts expanding to all directions
Are speaking of the past glory
  To the ear of my imagination.
That pass still is, where Pratap wrought havoc,
But that greatness is not, which all creation
  stood agape to hear,

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*Sītā-banabās* or the Exile of Sita was another longer poem in fourteen small cantos; *Nirjhariṇī* is a collection of fifteen lyrics on different topics, mostly aspects of nature; but *Pallīchitra* follows a unique plan. It has a prologue and eight scenes in course of which it describes the villagers, the ploughman, the village school, the village wood, the village god, the Shiva in the village, the cremation ground, the village market —but always taking care to bring out a moral; *e.g.*, the poet concludes his last section thus:

e bhava aṭai hāṭa, sarile bepāra
bāṭa dhari chāli yānti sarve ye yāhāra.

This world is the market-place. Finish your deal,
And you all depart, each in your own way

Again,

asthira e bhaver bebhāra,
kichhi chira na rahe kāhāra;
āji ye mukuṭa-dhārī, kāḷi se bāṭa-bhikārī;
kintu tuhi krushaka re chirakāḷa rahi,
nija rakta dāne pāḷu e vishāḷa mahī.

Unstable is the way of this life. Nothing remains for ever with anybody. The crowned head of today is the street beggar of to-morrow. But thou, O tiller of the soil, for ever dost thou nourish this wide, wide world by shedding thy own blood.

The Orissan village is thus consecrated in its wholeness by the poet who, in spite of his eye for a moral, has the gift for minute observation. Truly was he admired by a host of other writers, and correctly

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described by a later poet, Kuntaḷākumārī Sabat, in her dedication of one of her works to the elder poet,

as utkaḷara shreshṭha pallīkavi
jātīya kavitāra prasravaṇa—
nisarga kamaḷār varaputra,
etc., etc.

Gangādhar Meher, who died about twenty years ago, came from a village Barapāli in Sambalpur. A weaver by caste, profession and training, he read books with an avidity which is found rarely among men. This attracted the notice of the local landlord who weaned him from weaving and employed him in his administrative work. A pamphlet in verse from Gangadhar drew the attention of Radhanath, who continued his friend ever after. Thus encouraged he wrote *Indumatī, Kichakavadha,* and *Praṇya-ballarī,* taking his cue from *Raghuvansam, Mahābhāratam,* and *Abhijnāna-shakuntalam.* He celebrated his own country also in the *Utkaḷa-Lakshmī,* but the references to nature are far outweighed by those to Orissa's historical and literary associations. He was not a graduate, he had not received the benefit of any University or English education, and, it is said, he planned to write poems according to the alphabet. Ahalya-stab, Āmode, Indumatī, Utkaḷa-Lakshmī; but there it broke down. The trait shows a mechanical tendency verging on the alphabet which recalls the Chautishā writing of old. The marriage and the departure of Indumati have both been treated in a natural and modern way, so that there is no artificiality in the recasting of the episode from Kalidasa's great poem, of which it is no unworthy version. Both Radhanath Ray and Nandakishore Bal

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gave it welcome. *Kichakabadha* in seven *sargas* is more ambitious in design, and the maturity of Gangadhar's power may be well felt here, and he adopts some of the time-honoured measures of Oriya verse, using them with good effect. He demonstrated there his power of graphic representation of human character as well as nature's beauties. *Praṇaya-ballarī* is a graceful version of Kalidasa's drama, *Abhijnāna-shakuntalam,* divided into natural sections as praṇayāṅkura, prāṇaya-pallava, praṇaya-prasūna, praṇaya-saurabha, pushpe kīṭa, praṇaya-phaḷa, praṇaya-chhāyā. Such a version is at once a translation and a commentary. But *Tapaswinī* in eleven *sargas* is his most ambitious work, where he sought to depict Sītā in exile. Sītā is a tapaswinī, austere in her steadfast loyalty and in sinking out of life in quiet dignity; most of the verses are in the old *rāgas,* and the dedicatory prayer to Saraswatī may be read with interest—it is typical of his attempt to blend the old with the new.

Chintamaṇi Mahānti won much reputation as a poet in his life-time. His *Mahendra, Vishvachitra, Subhadrā, Mahodadhi,* and *Vikramāditya* have given him a dignity and prestige among poets. The last is an imaginative description of the great monarch, running out to twelve cantos. The beginning is as follows

Svāgata atīta smruti purāvruttamayee,
sukha-dukkha-unmeshiṇi, kaha krupā bahi
rājarshi vikramāditya pavitra ākhyāna
pheḍi taba rangālaya mahāyavanikā
dekhāa se nāṭakara puṇya abhinaya;
bhāva-yajna-vedikāre basi gurbāsane
shikhāa se abhinaya kari moṭe chāṭa.

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Welcome, the memory of the past, thou made up
of antiquity,
Inspirer of happiness or sorrow, do kindly tell me
The holy story of Vikramaditya, the sage of a king,
Casting off the great curtain of thy dramatic stage,
Show us the blessed performance of that play;
Seated on the preceptor's seat on the sacrificial
altar of the idea,
Teach me that play, make me thy disciple.

Many will find in this the old wine in the new bottle. The Bengali poet Madhusudan's lead in the direction may not be forgotten.

Chintamani has also an eye for nature, and he goes on dwelling upon the different aspects of the mountain and the sea, revelling in exploring new points and new features of nature which he has seen in his long rambles through the vast feudatory states of Orissa. He has also catered to the new nationalism by writing a poem on Mukunda Deva, the last great chief of Orissa, but he could not and did not exceed himself—he had already reached his height.

The most popular poet, however, after 1920, was Kuntaḷā Kumārī Sabat. After a childhood spent in Burma she studied in Cuttack Medical School for her professional training. She poured out lyrics in abundant profusion; she wrote on a variety of topics—love, patriotism, religion, the infinite yearnings of the human soul, in her *Bhrānti, Anjali, Uchchhvās, Parashamaṇi, Kālibohu, Archanā;* this last received the blessing of Bijaychandra Majumdar, who at once declared that her future was full of bright promise. Indeed, she was more a fulfilment than a new promise, because she



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received her inspiration from her predecessors. *Archanā* consists of four parts—*vilvadal* dedicated to Radhanath, *durvādal* to Nandakishore Bal, *Champādal* to Madhusudan Rao, *Shatadal* to the young son of Brajasundar Das. These dedications indeed are indicative of her temper. Her *visvarūpa o premasvarūpa* is a marvellous piece of workmanship. Elsewhere she is ethical in her tone and polished in her verse, though sometimes she spins out to inordinate lengths. Her poem to a star runs to about four hundred lines and thus concludes

heu vishvasevā mo jeebanavrata,
āsu bādhā, āsu dukkha shata shata,
na hue yenhe mun kshaṇeka neerāshā,
heu karma lakshya, vibhupade āshā,
kartavya mahata, kartavya uchita
kaḷi tārā, āji jeevane nihita,
mo jeevana-naishākāshe,
tārā sama sadā jaḷu āshājyotiḥ,
māguṇi mo bibhupāshe.

Let the service of all be my life's mission; whatever happens to me, though I be beset with dangers and sorrows innumerable, may I never despair, not even for a moment, but drive on with trust in God to the realisation of my aim in life. O star, you have fixed on my life a great and proper goal—and my prayer to my Lord is—in the dark sky of my benighted life let the light of hope ever shine like the star.

She received the distinctive title "Utkaḷa-Bhāratī" in her life-time from a Puri association, and the mukti-

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maṇḍap of Puri approved of it. She deserved it fully. Her *Raghu arakkhit* composed about 1926 was the first work of fiction in Oriya written by a woman.

Though not as powerful as these four, Baikunthanath Pattanayak and Narayanmohan De deserve to be mentioned for having provided poetry for the perusal of the Oriya-reading public in the pages of the *Utkaḷa Sāhitya* for close on three decades. Generations have been fed and enraptured by their productions. Of the two, Baikunthanath, among other things, had made experiments with verse forms; in particular, with the sonnet form; he lengthened his lines, mostly agreeing to run them on couplets to fourteen lines. Thus the rhyme scheme of the Italian or English sonnet has been more or less ignored by him (as doubtless by other writers in other languages of modern India) in his adaptations. Yet the fondness for the fourteen-line group persists in him. Sometimes he prefers sonnets to run in pairs or groups, one sonnet with him failing to exhaust the contents of his poetic imagination. But it must not be supposed that such groups or pairs of sonnets can be linked up with sonnet sequences in English (of which one remarkable example is supplied by Browning's *Sonnets from the Portuguese*) which are a distinct form in themselves. Baikunthanath's verses on the death of Pandit Visvanath Kar, the founder-editor of the *Utkaḷa Sāhitya,* are a case in point. Formal experiments apart, sensuousness of images, emotional pattern of poetry and a command over rhymes characterize his work.

Prof. Narayanmohan De has stood for the romantic view of poetry in the wake of the early nineteenth century English poets. Prof. De had been a teacher of English literature, and it was but natural that his

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poetic talents found an outlet in such verses. His imagination is controlled, and formal experiments have not been in his line.

These big strides in poetry should not, however, blind us to the advance made in prose. The names of two friends devoted to each other will at once rise to everyone's mind—two names which are almost identified with creative composition in prose in various moods, satirical and poetic, humorous and serious, studying men, manners and nature, and experimenting with prose as a measure of communication—now rich in colloquial expressions, now recalling associations of words as found in classical Sanskrit works. One of the two, Gopalchandra Praharaj, an old and veteran writer, first known for his inimitable humourous style; a realist, criticising the appendage of fashion and foibles; made his mark with *Bāi mahāntinka pānji* and *Bhāgavat tungire sandhyā*. The other writer, Shashibhusan Ray, the worthy son of Radhanath Ray, wrote in a neat, mellow, Sanskritized style, which was however certainly far from being pedantic. He wrote on the seasons, and made of them what was practically prose poems. He lovingly dwelt upon the beauties of landscape in different settings by riverside and hill-side, in morning and evening, in twilight and gloom. His *Dākshiṇātya-bhramaṇa*, *Utkaḷara rutuchitra* and *Utkaḷa-prakruti* have educated the reading public in the appreciation of nature. He had studied Sanskrit poetry to a good purpose, and though he read fairly extensively, he never missed the essentials. Not that he lacks original ideas; but he thinks without a theoretical plan, and strikes the reader as an impressionist rather than an academician. There is an undercurrent of poetry—his father's heritage?—both in his objective and inner experience,

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and this finds a quiet expression now and then in his writings.

Literature proper came in its turn to be examined and critically studied. Shyamsundar Rajguru, Mrityunjay Ratha, Gopinath Nandasharma, these three had been laying the foundations of a critical and historical study of the language and literature of Orissa. In the nineties, if not earlier, successful efforts were made to retain and print and publish the literature of old and mediaeval times, and now came the era for reading that literature with a critical eye, both with a view to ascertaining the growth and development of the language and literature of the province, and also in order to find out the continuity of the genius of the race. And for their labour, for the reverent study of the old times by these scholars, the student of Oriya literature will always remain grateful. Gopinath Nandasharma substantially contributed to such study through his dictionary as well as a momentous work in Oriya philology—*Oḍiā bhāshātattva.*

But we must not forget the progressive and creative writers, or those who style themselves so. Everyone wants of course to go ahead, not to stagnate, but to march forward; the modern progressive writers, however, use the word 'progress' in a special sense—they want to burst asunder the chains that bind them to the past, they would emphasise their difference with the past, this difference, which they term 'progress' There was or has been an India-wide movement, 'progressive' movement, and it has generally manifested itself in literature. Orissan progressives also banded themselves into a school or association or sangha, *Sabuja Sangha*—The evergreens. It is not known if the term *sabuj* was suggested by Pramatha Chaudhuri's

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*Sabuj-patra* in Bengali literature. A series of novels had, however, sprung into being characterised by a boldness of treatment, by an eager desire to tear the veil which usually hangs over things, by an idealism which seeks to lift the submerged classes and take them up for literary treatment. At least two writers of the school deserve specially to be mentioned. One is Kalindi Charaṇ Pāṇigrāhī, a writer of mature experience, of more than 20 years' standing, who had been a contributor to the *Utkaḷa Sāhitya*, and whose novels, short stories and poems proclaim him to be a thorough man of letters equipped with the requisite technical qualifications and experience for all the recognised media of creative literature. A romantic at the start,* he has become a full-fledged realist, as may be seen in his recent work, *Māṭira Manish*, the Man of the Earth; which is indeed a far cry from his *Sāgarikā*, a short story published about 20 years ago in the pages of the *Utkaḷa Sāhitya*. The other writer referred to above is much younger, Sachi Raut Ray, whose Boatman's Song had been an English translation of his work, rendered by the gifted poet Harindranath Chattopadhyay. A few lines from his poetry will show a major trend of the writer, his fighting attitude—

dhvansara ḍāka bhāsi āse deshopadeshu,
raṇabherī tora se-bhima shabade mishu,
maraṇa tohara mukti-devira shishu,
tinikāḷa tora jīvanara anuyāyī—
patha kāhin, patha kāhin?

* His poem, *gopanapure* 'in sanctuary', *Utkaḷa Sāhitya*, Jaistha, 1332, stresses this attitude : "Just as a bud smells intensely; so do I feel blinded by my fragrance. If nobody else cares to take me, I shall not fade away. If nobody else smiles and chooses me, I shall stay blind and faint under my own fragrance."

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The call of the destroying angel comes floating
on all sides;
Let your war trumpet beat in unison to that
terrific sound;
Your death is the child of the Goddess of Liberty;
Your birth and death must be like your life--
Where is the way, O, where is the way?

In spite of this attempt of the progressive writers to break off the past totally, and wander into fresh woods and pastures new, however, the link with the past has continued to be strengthened. New organizations have come into being, and new publications have seen the light of day. But there has been a revival of interest in the old authors too. To keep up an acquaintance with the past literature, in the first decade of the present century (in 1904, to be more definite), Madhusudan Rao and others organised the Utkaḷa Sāhitya Samāj which has been functioning still, holding annual sessions and encouraging the love of old and mediaeval literature by awarding prizes for essays on topics carefully selected. The Prāchī Samiti, under the distinguished lead of Pandit Artaballabh Mahanti (who has dedicated his life to the study of old authors), has been publishing carefully revised editions of old and mediaeval texts, the value of which will be more and more appreciated as acquaintance with the literature grows up. The study of Oriya language has also scored a triumph, first, in the *Shabdatattvabodha abhidhāna* by Gopinath Nanda Sharma and secondly, in the great lexicographical work compiled and published by Gopalchandra Praharaj, who had, as noted above, already made his mark by creative writings in prose. This also has been a strengthening of the tie with the ancient literature,

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as all lexicography by its very nature must be. Praharaj took up the idea of compiling a comprehensive Oriya Dictionary from a Principal of the Cuttack Training College in 1913-14, and soon buried himself in collecting words and idioms from the Feudatory States and outlying districts, no less than from other and more accessible strongholds of indigenous culture. He began his manuscript in 1919 and completed his work by 1927 By that time, he had received encouragement and co-operation from many quarters, and the chiefs of Orissa, and the Bihar and Orissa Government also, came to his help. The first volume of this dictionary, *Pūrṇchandra Bhāshākosha,* was printed in 1931. One of the aims of the compiler was to present the rich stock of 'saral, khānti' simple and pure words. This purity drive specially opens the question of linking up with the past. He was, however, not an admirer of Sanskritic words, unless they were, at the same time, simple to understand. It was his ambition to roll an encyclopaedia and an etymological dictionary into one. One of his friends pored over old Oriya works and carefully noted down peculiar words and their uses. These have been utilized in the dictionary and the total words treated number about 1,84,000. One of the aims of the lexicographer was undoubtedly the introduction of the rich classics of the Oriya language to numerous readers outside Orissa.

No account of modern Indian literature may be considered complete without a reference to the cultural conflict through which modern Indian society is passing. It is, so to say, the literary aspect of a sociological phenomenon, or the reflection of politics in its larger sense in literature. Three tendencies may be specially noted under this head. There is an anti-western mode,

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to stick to the past and to keep at an arm's length the importation of Western thought and form. In Phakirmohan Senapati's novels, in the short stories of some writers of the present day, we may notice a yearning to keep intact the old forms, the old ways, and to deride the new—not because they are new, but because they upset and disturb the old ways, the smooth tenor of life to which the people have been accustomed; because, in short, the new is so often the harbinger of evil, not of good. It is also felt that the old forms are still powerful, still potent for stirring the imagination of the people. The publication of old literary forms is sure to lead to some revivals. But it must be admitted that such a move may at best be partially successful. Senapati's novels were themselves an importation in form, and the yearning for the old may only be accepted as a strong protest against the cultural invasion by the west.

It will be interesting here to note how the nationalist mind in Orissa yearned for the revival of the past in the matter of literary appreciation. After describing how in the past the village schools in Orissa helped to keep alive the national literature, the *Satyabādī* regrets

It is a matter of great sorrow that modern educated society does not evince so much interest in old literature. Many among us do not know even the main incidents of the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Māhābhārata*. How can they? There is hardly any room for them in our educational curriculum. The course of studies for boys and girls in the primary schools has not yet been popular. Whether it will ever be popular or not it is impossible to say now. The *Bhāgavata Ghara* in the villages is falling to pieces. *Chhānda, purāṇ, bhajan* are no longer cultivated as before. On all sides there is a



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clamour for general education, but the way is dried up. Our nation is now passing through a crisis in literary as well as other matters. We have given up the past, but have nothing new to hold on to. What new idea or light we expect or get in a slight measure should not be altogether cut off from the old. In that case it will never be popular. We shall have to build up the national literature properly by restoring the old and introducing the new.*

This protest has naturally led to another—all foreign influences have to be scrutinised and kept at a distance, of course, so far as possible. Provincial influences, influences from other provinces, from neighbouring provinces in particular, have come to be viewed with suspicion. This has been more or less due to the instinct of self-preservation, lest other influences should submerge the individuality of the province, at least weaken it.

But along with these two tendencies, anti-western and anti-foreign as we may term them, we have to reckon with the influence of the Indian National Congress and the call of Indian unity which it inspires. This must have in time its proper repercussions in Oriya literature, and nationalist (not merely political) literature shows the same characteristics all over India.

The establishment of a University for Orissa is expected to organize, unify and promote the study of Oriya language and literature, and to impart an additional impetus to its cultivation. It is being largely recognised, not only in Indian Universities but also in the Universities of the West, that one's mother tongue deserves to be studied with at least as much attention as

* *Satyabādī*, 1324, Vol. III, Nos. 3-4.

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any other subject. This principle is being admitted in theory and followed in practice, and this is bound to result in a rich harvest for the Oriya language and literature in the years to come. The newly established Utkal University should, in the natural fitness of things, furnish a fresh starting point for its advancement. If the University proceeds, as it should, to place proper emphasis from the very beginning on the study of the literature of the country both in the school and college course including the post-graduate, if it seeks to conserve the heritage (no mean one) of the past and to stimulate fresh additions, if it applies its abundant resources to that end, then there is reason to hope that it will be a rallying force, and that Oriya literature, both critical and creative, will have gained. The groundwork, a necessary preliminary to the creating of a superstructure, will have been done, and the new life of the people and the Oriya literature will have been brought nearer and nearer to each other, and the issue made more real. As a matter of fact, many changes are in the offing, and it remains to be seen how far the new University will work to serve this particular end of emphasising the study of the language and literature of the country.

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CHAPTER VIII

# RETROSPECT

Oriya language has been in existence for about a thousand years now, and its literary products have been continuous for the last 500 years at least, historically speaking. This continuity has given it an importance which historians cannot afford to forget, and 'aishvaryya-shālinī' has been the epithet bestowed on the language by a modern scholar. The wealth of form and imagination indicated by the exquisite poems of Saraḷa Dasa, Jagannatha Dasa, Upendra Bhanja, Abhimanyu Samanta Sinha, to name these stalwarts only, is undoubtedly an asset. What has modern Oriya to show by its side? That is the question which we have tried to answer in the foregoing pages.

The obvious thing comes out in an attempt to compare Saraḷa Dasa with Radhanath Ray, or any other modern poet. The comparison, if dispassionate, will show that the modern writer has a stronger appeal for the modern reader, simply because he is new in ideas, technique or association. The *Mahāyātrā* is a poem which we occasionally read, and quote too, while Saraḷa Dasa receives our homage and a revered nook in our bookshelf, enjoying undisturbed rest. The new metre, the new implications, the new way of describing old places, the newness of it all has in itself a charm from which we do not want to break away. But why labour the point? That modern products will come in for appreciation from the modern reader goes without saying; that is but natural, and, it may be repeated, obvious.

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Let us, however, understand the reason why. When we say 'the modern reader', we mean the educated young man who has learnt from the scholar and the critic. The difference between the ordinary man in the street and the learned man, in the matter of perspective, has been beautifully brought out by Pearl Buck while speaking of the growth of the novel in old China "Happily for the Chinese novel, it was not considered by the scholars as literature. Man and book, they were free from the criticisms of those scholars and their requirements of art, their techniques of expression and their talk of literary significances and all that discussion of what is and is not art, as if art were an absolute and not the changing thing it is, fluctuating even within decades! The Chinese novel was free. It grew as it liked out of its own soil, the common people, nurtured by that heartiest of sunshine, popular approval, and untouched by the cold and frosty winds of scholar's art" (*The Chinese Novel,* by Pearl S. Buck, 1939, Macmillan & Co. Ltd.). However, as we survey modern literature in special reference to conditions which obtained before Western influence could be felt, we find that there has been an attempt at concentrating culture and power in big cities and small towns. In the past, in Orissa as in other provinces of India, culture was evenly distributed and the villages presented a general level which ought to have excited notice and admiration. The great cities of course were not without their share of culture, but there was no antagonism between the culture of the village and that of the city. Contact with the Western world altered the face of the land, and power and patronage were more or less concentrated in towns and cities which drew their sustenance from the villages. No wonder that villages

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languished and withered under the process. English education was, and still is, a measure of culture, and it has suitable returns in terms of preferment. Literature has ceased to cater for the people, and there is no sharing of the Jagannatha Dasa's *Bhāgabata* or Saraḷa Dasa's *Mahābhārata* or Bhima Bhoi's songs with the people. The story of the introduction of English education has still to be told, and the changes it has introduced have still to be noted and measured. Faced with a cultural crisis some thinkers advocated what is known as the infiltration theory: if the educated class could be induced to attend to the cultural needs of the masses there would not be the disparity that otherwise threatened to separate the masses from the *elité*. After a long interval of more than half a century the attitude towards this question seems to have been corrected and signs are not wanting of a revival of an interest, a real tangible interest, in the education of the people in their own language and literature. Great spirits, it may be hoped, will again be abroad and stirring, and Oriya Literature enter upon a new phase. No one of course can command the spirit—it bloweth where it listeth—but the conditions are opportune. An admission that one's own language and literature are objects of study has been made after much noise and scholarly argument, and serious consideration from many points of view. A widening of the mental horizon is taking place throughout the world; and in the midst of all these, and as their result, a glorious dawn of Oriya literature may be ushered in.

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## APPENDIX A

# WESTERN INFLUENCE IN ORIYA LITERATURE

The contact of the west with Orissa is not of recent date; her geographical position made her coast a vantage-ground for trade-seeking invaders; we need not dwell on any ancient or mediæval accounts of the contact between Orissa and the west, but may point, in modern times, to the Portuguese who, coming up from Madras along the coast, founded an establishment at Pipli, which they utilised as a prosperous slave market, for residence, and also for a church (Our Lady of the Rosary). The Portuguese had another settlement at Balasore where also they built a church. These settlements flourished in the middle of the 17th century, and from that period up to the 19th the political turmoils stirred the life of the times, and that made it impossible for western culture to act upon the inhabitants of the province. These settlers had perhaps then very little culture to give, busy as they must have been in stabilising their own position and recruited as they were mainly from a class of people not conspicuous for intellectual culture. The result of these 150 years' stay and sway of the Portuguese is to be found, among other things, in the vocabulary of the Oriya language in which 34 words have been traced to a Portuguese origin by Mr. J. J. A. Campos in his account of the rise and decline of the Portuguese power in Bengal. It was only in the first years of the 19th century that the English came into power in Orissa and so they could not, until

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towards the end of the century, when they were well-established, set in motion forces which turned the current of Orissan thought, and along with it Orissan literature, in a distinct channel,—to indicate which is the aim of this paper.

It is interesting to observe that the British influence, once it had begun, was made to spread in a systematic way and with thoroughness. This is true of all India. A system of education by which the minds while in a plastic condition may feed on English literature, western philosophy, European history, and may receive practical lessons in democracy, into giving up all notions of caste, at least for the period of training in schools and colleges; the printing press and the newspapers which have helped in linking the country, however slightly, both to its ancient traditions and its present environment and thus promoted a solidarity which has greatly contributed to the growth of nationality; movements, religious, social and political, which have passed over India causing numerous changes in the shades of thought and ways of living; an administration which levelled barriers through its courts of law and codes of procedure, criminal and civil, uniform throughout the provinces; the mere fact that neighbouring provinces are affected by the influence; —all these served as channels opening up the new currents through the hills and dales of Orissa and bringing about changes in mentality which in turn would be, as they actually have been, reflected in the literature of the country.

What has been the result in literature? Let us detail some of the changes. First, in prose forms; for the consolidation of prose, grammars and dictionaries are necessary; and western attempts laid the founda-

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tion. The first grammar of the Oriya language[1] was written by Rev. A. Sutton and published in 1831. To the author of this pioneer attempt it came as a discovery that 'the Oriya language was a distinct, and an original one' The printing press in Orissa had come into being along with the initiation of active propaganda by the Baptist Mission of England, and Rev. Sutton was a member of the Mission. The difference between the traditional *kosha,* in which a string of synonyms was given as in the *Gītābhidhān* of Upendra Bhanja authorship (which must, after all, be a doubtful matter), and the new type which gives different uses of the same word, with illustrative references, as in Jagannath Rao's *Utkaḷ Abhidhān,*[2] must be put down as due to English and Bengali models, which Mr. Rao acknowledges in the preface. It may be noted that Rev. Sutton had followed his Oriya Grammar with an Oriya Dictionary in 1841 and this book was published in three volumes in Cuttack. Mr. Sutton was aware of the importance of his work and wrote 'A compiler of dictionaries is a kind of pioneer in literature.' W. C. Lacy, Rev. W Miller, and H. C. B. Hallam are other names worth recording by those who wish to trace western influence in Oriya, in the making of modern Oriya language and literature. Like many other Indian Vernaculars, more or less, modern Oriya prose has been largely due to western models and necessaries of life and civil administration, and the different prose forms, the novel, the essay, the newspaper, etc., are directly or indirectly traceable to English influence. Such a work as *Bibāsinī* or *Māmu* was impossible in the

[1] Rev. A. Sutton—*An Introductory Grammar of the Oriya language,* Calcutta, 1831.
[2] Jagannath Rao—*Utkaḷ Abhidhān,*



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past, before the days of British influence, not only with regard to the critical, satirical attitude towards life, but also in point of prose style. The whole world of prose—and it is not a small world either—is due directly or indirectly to similar works in English prose.

Let us now turn to verse forms. The major portion of Oriya verse is even to-day quite classical or traditional in diction and style, but while this is true of the poetry of Radhanath Ray, one of the three pioneers in modern Oriya literature, how much has been the influence of the west on him in the matter of literary forms, and in a new literary sense which, passing out from him, forms a rich contribution to modern Oriya literature! *Mahāyātrā,* incomplete in 9 cantos or *sargas*, is in blank verse, and though the preface written by a friend of the poet's asserts that there is nothing strange in the medium but that the Sanskrit poetry has many models to show the way to blank verse, we must put that down to the patriotic bias. The western influence in it has been acknowledged by the writer of that same preface. Again, the book is an epic, an epic fragment which, in tone and composition, is something new, not familiar to the language,—it is in perfect consonance with the influence of Milton and other westerners, filtrating through the writings of Michael Madhusudan Datta, to whom Radhanath had served an apprenticeship in literature. The address of homage which begins the book, the patriotic motive, the romance of history, —all these new features are traceable to western influence. Again, the few fragments on the plan of the *Vīrāṅganā Kāvya* which are to be found in his writings, as *Yudhiṣṭhiraṇka prati vyās,* are also new forms animated by a new spirit. The reader of Radhanath's writings cannot help noticing that he

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was widely read in Scott and Byron, or their Bengali admirers who popularised their methods through Bengali literature. Madhusudan Rao, the literary comrade of Radhanath, in spite of his deep admiration for things of the land, had also been influenced by the west, *e.g.*, in his sonnets and elegies,—forms new to Oriya. It remained for succeeding writers to continue in their line and to adopt or acclimatise the new forms whose newness has worn off with use.

Similarly with regard to drama; the old *yātrās* which had charmed by the stories of Rama and Sita were no longer to please the changed spirit of the people. Both in subject and in technique there had been much of a change. The dramatists of the new age were busy satirising the follies of the times. Ram Shankar Ray is a suitable example, being the leader of the new school. It is interesting to note the different attempts at finding suitable terms for the English names—*scene* and *act*. Harihar Rath, Mrittyunjay Rath and Ramshankar Ray sometimes use *Aṅka* and *Abhinay,* sometimes *Drushya* and *Aṅka,* in order to convey the distinction, and the student is reminded of similar attempts in Bengali literature.

It is still an open question how far Oriya literature received western influence directly, and how far through the medium of Bengali. The bond of Vaishnavism between the two countries, the establishment of one university for both, and many other ways of interaction make it probable that Oriya was influenced through Bengali. Even many of the words cited by Mr. Campos referred to above are common to Bengali and Oriya, and it would be an interesting problem for the philologist to answer—'Which of the two sets, Bengali and Oriya, first adopted these words from the

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Portuguese!' The comparative delay of the influence in Orissa is explained by the medium of Bengali, which was used extensively and which was only given up later, during the seventies. There could not have been any talks of cultural interchange so long as the baneful results of the dire famine of 1867 raged through the province, when rice sold at 10 to 12 seers per rupee[3], and made 15,000 children helpless and destitute, in the city of Cuttack alone, and over which there had been a debate, deserving better publicity, in the House of Commons on August 2, 1867. The great pioneer of modern Oriya literature was Radhanath Ray, whose *Lekhāvalī* was written in Bengali and under the influence of Michael Madhusudan. The mere fact that Bhudev Mukhopadhyaya, a mentor to Radhanath in matters literary and miscellaneous, took up the rôle of Drinkwater Bethune to the young poet and induced him to write in Oriya, shows the part played by Bengali literature in the make-up of Radhanath. The Oriya poet himself complained that the literature of his country had been too much under the shadow of the Bengali literature which was very much to be deplored. He complained[4] that not to speak of the Bengali literature, even the Hindi literature was marching ahead, while Oriya was in a static condition. The Bengali had been a help in bringing within the scope of the Oriya, a wealth of information, but at the sacrifice of his originality.

Speaking of modern times, it is a common experience to come across specimens of Oriya literature composed under the influence of Bengali, and thus

[3] *Indian Mirror*, July 15, 1867.
[4] Paper read at the Annual Meeting of the Utkal Sahitya Samaj by Radhanath Ray.

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exhibiting traces of western influence in form and temper.

It is, however, apparent that there has been less, far less, of western influence in Oriya than in Bengali. It has been neither so deep nor so extensive. And there are reasons for it. Among others it may be suggested that the centre of distribution of the influence has been Calcutta, the seat of the university, the seat of the provincial government for a long time, and the centre of commerce. Cultural confusion has been nowhere so great as in Bengal, as may be seen on reference to the Census figures for 1921; in Bengal 339 males per ten thousand of age 5 and up were literate in English, while the number for Bihar and Orissa was only 78. The force applied at the centre becomes attenuated a great deal as it passes on to the periphery, and the physical inaccessibility of Orissa has also helped in preserving her literature, as it has her architecture, intact, her indigenous culture uncontaminated, and who knows if that is not one of the reasons why there is no artistic renaissance in Orissa as there is in Bengal.

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## APPENDIX B

# POOREE ENGLISH SCHOOL (1835-40)

Wilkinson, himself a chief patron and a liberal subscriber for education, had been trying to organise an English and Vernacular School at Pooree and his letter to J. Grant, Esq., Apothecary General, resident in Calcutta, dated 17-6-1835 from Puri, states that they at Puri had already collected Rs. 1,005 as donation and Rs. 867 as subscription (600 rupees as monthly subscription, 180 as quarterly, and 87 as yearly). Wilkinson remarks "Our schools will be in the town of Pooree and all or nearly all our scholars will be Hindus as there are scarcely any Mahomedans in the district." Writing in June he seems to be anxious for a good master of English, almost assuring Grant that the school buildings would be ready by 1st October.[1]

The appointment of a master for Puri was however by no means an easy job; at least no master was available at Puri on the 1st October as hoped for in Wilkinson's letter noted above. Gunganarain Bose had been appointed meanwhile, but he did not attend at once. On the contrary, in his letter dated October 7th, 1835[2], we find him wrangling for some conveyance allowance, Rs. 100, considerably more than the poor man's monthly earnings as salary. Whatever other people might think of a journey from Calcutta to Puri, Gunganarain could not relish the idea. "The distance of Pooree from Calcutta being considerable enough to

[1] General Committee of Public Instruction—Correspondence, Vol. 40, pp. 1-4.

[2] *Ibid*, pp. 5-7.

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cause a journey of more than a fortnight in travelling from the latter to the former place, whether by land direct to it, or by water as far as Balasore, and thence by land down to the destined place, I would beg that you would request the General Committee of Public Instruction to allow me the charge of a conveyance to enable me to prosecute this long journey with expedition and ease."

Any way, Gunganarain reached Pooree on the 10th November, 1835 and we find him submitting a Return[3] of the students of the Pooree School for the 1st quarter of 1836 in obedience to the instructions of the Secretary to the General Committee of Public Instruction. This might be taken as the first report of the first English School for Pooree. The total number of students was 25, of whom 12 had been admitted during the last quarter of 1835, and all of them were Hindus. Commenting on the smallness of the number, Gunganarain wrote "The inhabitants of the Town, chiefly consist of the Priests of the Temple of Juggernauth, to whom a knowledge of the Shaster is more profitable than the English Language."[4] As it was, most of the students admitted were the children of Government officers. The School House was formerly the cutchery and residence of the Sudder Aumeen, and stood in a central and airy part of the town, large enough for the accommodation of 50 scholars—probably the highest they could hope for at the time—the only disadvantage of the building being that the roof was rather low. It is curious to note that the report complains of a great want of an Oriya-English dictionary, that the boys might under-

[3] *Ibid*, pp. 22-23.
[4] *Ibid*, pp. 17-18.

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stand the meanings of words, Gunganarain the school-master ending with the remark "I am not aware of the existence of such a work" Quarter of a century before this, the College of Fort William had published a Vocabulary of Oriya and English words, and it could be expected that Gunganarain would be acquainted with the work. In his Return he frankly explains that "the school having only just opened, and almost all the students having entered entirely ignorant of the alphabet, none are sufficiently advanced in reading and writing, to commence any particular branch of study.

Yet the students numbering twenty-five were allotted to four classes. The fourth or last class (containing eight students—Hoorseekess Doss, Aunund Singh, Loknauth Sing, Jugbundoo Doss, Narain Mytee, Aununt Ghose, Benod Doss Mettre, Judoonauth Dutt) comprised of those who were not yet quite familiar with compound letters, some so far advanced as to read syllables of three letters. The next higher (3rd) class had on its rolls four students only—Gangaram Doss, Raghoonauth Doss, Rogoo Sing, Bowreebundoo Doss. They could go through easy reading lessons composed of words of five letters and could spell them with tolerable correctness. They had no great fault in their conduct and when they were absent it was on adequate grounds. They were also "always seen intent on their books" This last is an eloquent index of the educational standard of those days.

The six students of the second class Modoosoodun Mookerjee, Modoosoodun Chatterjee, Untagee Singh, Gunnesh Santra, Deenbundoo Sahu and Modoosoodun Dutt—were however neither impeccable in their conduct nor intent on their books. But they could read easily short lessons, spell the most difficult words occurring

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in them with great accuracy, and were just learning to write.

There were seven students (Gopee Bundoo Doss, Khetro Chunder Audy, Rogunauth Audy, Moothee Lall Sain, Ramgopaul Debsurman, Sudanund Ghose, Saboo Panee) in the first class varying in age from 7 to 15 years. They had nearly finished the first number of the New Spelling Book. They could also write from copies and spell and explain in their own language whatever they read in their English text; they were well-behaved and attentive to lessons.

The promise (?) the Return showed was not kept up. Towards the end of the year, rather, six months after the submission of the Return, there is bad news from J. C. R. Payne, the Local Secretary, in his letter dated 9th November, 1836[5] addressed to J. C. C. Sutherland, Secretary to the General Committee of Public Instruction. While reporting very well on Bose's management, it states at the same time that Bose had frequent attacks of fever and suggests that he should be relieved of his charge. This is accompanied by a recommendation that he might make a very good teacher in some other station "but", we read on, "the sea air here disagrees with most Bengallees and up-country men of a delicate constitution" This is amusing news indeed, because the holy town had been long a place of pilgrimage and few complaints had been made on the above score.

Gunganarain's Return for the 3rd quarter of 1836 had not been very assuring, however, about the immediate success of the school. On the contrary he notes a disinclination in the boys to receive an English

[5] *Ibid*, pp. 69-71.

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education. But he hopes for better times to come. "There had not been, it appears, any regular Vernacular Schools in this town, till the last year, when the philanthropic gentlemen of the station established several by means of their private contribution."[6] These would, he hoped, instil a love of knowledge into the minds of the students so that they would seek admission into the English School.

Early in 1837 W S. R. Davies came to Pooree school as its 'Headmaster', a new designation. Ignoraut of both Oriya and Bengali on his first arrival, he subsequently picked up both the languages. In his letter to J. C. R. Payne, the Secretary of the Local Committee of Public Instruction, dated the 1st March 1839, Davies prayed for an increment to his allowance of a hundred rupees out of which, he averred, he had to pay Rs. 30 for palki expenses!

An interesting reference was made[8] by the Secretary of the Local Committee of Public Instruction to the General Committee regarding punishments inflicted upon native boys in the Public schools, about which there seemed a strong difference of opinion. The Local Committee had interdicted the use of the rattan in their schools, and directed that the young offender should stand up for a length of time in a prominent part of the school. It strongly held that 'no man is so invariably cool and unsusceptible of annoyance from the vexations of a school as to avoid even punishing beyond what is absolutely necessary, or beyond any prescribed limit.' Naturally it asked the General Committee if it was the custom in the Hooghly

[6] *Ibid*, pp. 57-59.
*Ibid*, pp. 255-258.
[8] *Ibid*, pp. 259-265.

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and other schools to use the rattan. It is refreshing to note that T. A. Wise, Secretary of the General Committee, intimated in reply the General Committee's disapproval of the infliction of corporal punishment in the schools under their authority, and that the Local Committee was misinformed as to the practice in the Hoogly College. The order in force there which was quoted in Wise's letter dated 6th May 1839 read as follows :—

"Corporal punishment is not permitted on any pretence whatever. When admonition, degradation in the class, and tasks fail of the desired effect, the Pupil is to be reported to the Head Master, and Principal. Should a boy be thus incorrigible he is to be expelled, and his name is to be struck out of the Books of the College."

Davies was absorbed into Government executive service and could no longer work as the Headmaster; he became Secretary to the Local Committee. The mastership of the school was offered to W E. Capon who, however, in his application to the General Committee dated 8th August, 1839[9] prayed for extension of joining time so as to enable him to start on 20th September. Apparently, the General Committee advised him to start immediately; for we find Capon intimating on 31st August[10] that he would start that very evening, but as the Dak expenses amounted to Rs. 200 he might be allowed by the Committee half the amount. Alas! it was not to be; and Capon in his letter to the General Committee dated 17th September[11] states that he had spitted blood again and again and

[9] *Ibid*, pp. 319-21.
[10] *Ibid*, pp. 323-25.
[11] *Ibid*, pp. 327-29.

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had been obliged to return after having proceeded to a short distance.

Now that Capon was out of the picture, the General Committee had to select another candidate, and it found its man in Henry Walpole who accepted the situation on October 30 on a monthly salary of Rs. 100 and joined his appointment at Pooree on 5th December.[12]

A little more than five weeks later, Davies sent the Report of the School to the General Committee on the 16th January, 1840. The letter[13] accompanying the Report states that the Local Committee not only pays the expenses of the different Vernacular schools but also meets the expenditure of the English school on certain heads—for the assistant teacher, the Duftery, the monitors etc. The College had three departments[14]: (1) English and Vernacular, (2) Sanskrit, (3) Mohammedan. There were no students in (3), in Sanskrit the number of pupils rose to 37, while in (1) the number was 42. In the Branch Oriya schools there were ninety pupils on the rolls. It is very strange that there were no Christian nor Mohammedan students.

The Secretary's letter complains about inadequacy of funds and want of text-books. Of a province like Orissa where education through the vernacular seems to be fairly well spread, it writes "there does not at present exist a single work of any kind which could be adopted as a class book," and proposes to publish translations of approved works if the General Committee helps liberally. The following excerpt will be

[12] *Ibid*, p. 391.
[13] *Ibid*, pp. 417-19.
[14] *Ibid*, p. 435.

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read with interest at this time of the day. "General information cannot be spread through the country by means of English education alone."

About a month later, on the 20th April 1840,[15] the Local Secretary reports to the General Committee increase in the number of pupils by about 35, the total figure for the English Department thus coming up to about eighty. But at the same time it complained about the inefficiency of teachers "not considering at present Mr. Walpole's want of acquaintance with the dialects spoken either in Bengal or Orissa which forms no small obstacle in itself to the course of instruction, the allotment of the Head Master's time with reference to the classes will sufficiently prove that some alteration in the Establishment is necessary. The Local Committee therefore would strongly recommend the appointment of a native teacher on a moderate salary in the capacity of assistant" The Secretary laid special emphasis on one particular :—"no individual who would prove wanting in the knowledge of the Bengallee should be selected."

The letter is remarkable also on account of its ignorance of works in the Oriya language, and its attitude in general to the people of the province, though the writer is wonderfully correct in his prescription of a cure through the school—"while therefore endeavouring to promote the cause of European literature among the few it must look to the spreading of the elements of general and useful knowledge among the mass by means more genial to the condition of the people." It was getting the 1st part of the Heetopadesa, viz., "mitralabha" translated and printed at

[15] *Ibid*, pp. 427-56.

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Cuttack, the cost being Rs. 150 (Cos.) for 300 copies consisting of about 60 pages 12mo.

While the note of this letter is generally optimistic the letter dated the 27th April[16] (just a week later) contains strange news Mr. Walpole has given notice of resignation, on grounds of ill-health, of his appointment as the Headmaster of the Pooree School with effect from 1st May next! The Local Secretary therefore presses his point "Unless some assurance can be given that the school shall not again be closed so suddenly there is a great probability that the more respectable natives will withdraw their children and subscriptions. It should be intimated to future candidates that the individual appointed shall give two months' notice of resignation, and that no shorter period shall be allowed except extreme urgency, which should be certified by a medical certificate."

Within nine days of Walpole's resignation an application[17] was submitted by A. A. O'Brien who had been an assistant overseer under Becher but who had been recently dismissed by his then executive officer. O'Brien's application was recommended[18] by W Taylor, one of the two chief patrons of the school, and, pending the final sanction of the General Committee, the Local Committee placed him in temporary charge. But on 17th July, when members of the school proceeded to the school house to witness the half-yearly examination, they found O'Brien in a state of intoxication and the Local Committee immediately suspended him.[19]

[16] *Ibid*, pp. 457-8.
[17] *Ibid*, pp. 463-4.
[18] *Ibid*, pp. 475-6.
[19] *Ibid*, p. 487.

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On the 27th August[20] the members of the Local Committee and subscribers to the Pooree School met at a public meeting and unanimously passed resolutions

(1) abolishing the Sanskrit school and recommending the same of the English school as they did not offer sufficient prospects of advantage, no pupils coming forward to study for any other purpose than obtaining official employment of an inferior grade;
(2) giving up the three Oriya schools;
(3) converting the English school house into a Vernacular school on a liberal scale;
(4) appointing a Headmaster thereto on a salary of Rs. 15, and three subordinate teachers on Rs. 7 each;
(5) recommending that candidates for the appointments be examined at Puri centre;
(6) arranging to spend the amount of public subscription in printing and publishing translations into Oriya; and
(7) applying to the General Committee for Rs. 52 to run the establishment.

From June 1835 to August 1840 the enterprise had been kept up; it was one of the first attempts to organise an English school at Puri, and though the enterprise failed, the enthusiasts did not give up the attempt altogether but apparently waited for better days; and the next attempt at Cuttack must have (at least morally) owed to it the success it achieved.

[20] *Ibid*, pp. 501-5.

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